


THE  
VERTUE  
AND  
VALUE  
OF  
BAPTISM:

*In which the*  
Dignity and Duty of  
The due Right of Infants to  
And their right above that of } Baptism.  
grown persons by  
The degrading and destructive }  
Principles and Practices of }

ARE  
Catechetically propounded, plainly  
Preached, and now Published as an An-  
tidote to the Baptism-Despising-Di-  
ctates of *John Simpson*.

---

By *Zachariah Croston*, Minister at *Bowdoin*  
Aldgate, London. 

---

*Imprimatur*, *Edm. Calamy*.

---

London, Printed by *D.M.* for *J. Nisball* li-  
ving next door to the *Dolphin* in  
the *Minories*, 1678.

33

1781







To the Right Worshipful  
*Richard Garforde,*  
AND  
*Robert Burdet,*  
Esquires.

And the rest of his Be-  
loved Parishioners, late As-  
sertors of his innocence,  
and Protectors against his  
groundless and furious Per-  
secutions.

*Right Worshipful and wel-beloved,*

**T**O you of all men this  
Treatise oweth its *De-  
dication*, and from you  
must needs demand its  
*Patronage*: for that in order  
to your good in the Instruction  
(a 2) and

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

and establishment of you in the order of the Gospel, and Ordinances of Jesus Christ: it hath been preached once and again, and is now Printed: you cannot be insensible how you baptized Members of the Catholick Church were dispersed, as Sheep without any Shepherd; nay by the Congregational Anabaptistical principles and practises, and in order to their Schismatical Church-gathering design, you were by Rude, Rust, Foolish-wise, and Baptism-blaspheming Simpson, paganized and proclaimed Dogs, aliens and strangers to the Common-wealth of Israel: when the zealous importunity of some among you, meeting in me with a real pity of your Pagan posture, did engage me to take of you, as a Church of Jesus Christ, the care and charge, I was constrained



## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

to lay again the Foundations these wicked men had razed, and to inform you in the first rudiments of Religion, and first ordinances of worship, that you might understand the dignity and duty of your Baptism, in which I finde such dulness in common capacity, that the things you heard you must hear again, and indeed Read before many will receive them. I being come among you, and (by Gods blessing on my Ministry) having reduced you into some order, convinced some persons of their *Rebaptized vanity*, and Parents of the sinfull neglect of their Infants interest in the Covenant: have met with violent opposition, and malicious interruptions in the work of God: constraining me to preach unto you the Gospel of Truth through much contention; where-

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

in yet through grace *I have waxed bold.* You are manifest Witnesses that the Anabaptists will *Baptize with fire and fury*, such as they cannot *Baptize with water* in the way of their folly : By what clamours have they clouded my name (representing me uncivil, whilst for fear of the Law they durst not render me prophane) how they have by false surmizes prejudiced present powers, by false accusations, palpable perjury, extrajudicial Proceſs, partial and prejudiced Judges (of their own picking) and implacable fury darkned my credit, weakned my Ministry, disturbed my peace, and endeavoured to stop my mouth, you and all the Churches of God cannot but know. The guilt and odium whereof you have taken from your selves by your  
ſea-

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

seasonable Attestation to my Innocencie, and serious protest against their groundless cruelty, wherein I bless God I can rejoyce, *It is the cause that makes the Martyr*, and what is the cause of all that calamity they have to me created; Let the fretting of their spirits, when your Pulpit sounded the Sacrament of Baptism is to be administred; your Reverend attendance on that Ordinance is desired: their railing speeches on all occasions uttered against Infant Baptism, their invective Letters to me written, (which I keep as Monuments of their folly and malice) their often strugling to set up Oats, Knowls, Lamb, Simpson, to blaspheme Gods Ordinances; and at last violent and unjust intrusion of John Simpson into the Baptismal Season of the Sabbath, to

(a 4) the

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

the excluding of that Ordinance, and vilifying the same in the sight of the People, and that not only in its *subjects*, but in *it self*, openly teaching baptism is no ground of Communion with the Church visible; witness to all the world, if I suffer as an evil doer; Whose Ox or Ass have I taken? what Law have I violated? whom did I injure in word or deed? How often have I sought for competent impartial Judges, that might convict me? and proposed ways of Accommodation: admitted them, when sought by my enemies, whose Return hath been we will have no peace, no agreement, no arbitration; nay, my enemies being Judges, the ground of their quarrel and enmity, is my endeavours to return you into order; and their cry is, *He will not let*  
Simp-

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Simpson preach. So that because I will not suffer that woman Jezabel to teach and seduce the Lord's people, I must be loaded with calumny, and followed with vexation: Well be it so, I will bless God for supporting, and wait on him for saving mercy; and pray that you may be more confident in the truths confirmed by my Sufferings, wherein you also have born your share. I cannot but observe how Heretical Malice hath trampled on your dignities and gravities by Military insolency, and vulgar rudeness, yet hath God hitherto given you hearts, to adhere to me and the truths by me witnessed. Whilst you have owned my Ministry; under so great a *Fight of affliction*, I cannot but hope you will do it still, and be more confirmed in the *verne* and

(a 5) *value.*

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

*value of your received Baptism,*  
both which are here plainly  
and practically propounded to  
your view. Many eminent men  
have most fully debated the  
Controversie, and defended  
your *Infants Right to Baptism,*  
but of their Labours, I observe  
the vulgar make little use; for  
*Practical conviction of sin,* I find  
to be the best *confutation of er-*  
*ror,* and have therefore attem-  
pted it in the ensuing Treatise  
for its stile and method, suited  
to vulgar capacity; receive it as  
a token of my true affection to  
your Souls, and Gods holy Or-  
dinances, read it as the directi-  
on of your duty, learn by it to  
prize Baptism, as the high Pri-  
vilege of you and yours, and  
in doing and suffering, shew  
forth the vertue and value of  
the Covenant of God on your  
flsh, living as Baptized into  
the



## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to which end you may be assured as of the endeavours, so the earnest prayers of,

Your greatly reproached and persecuted, but yet really innocent, and resolvedly zealous  
Pastor,

*Zach. Crofton.*

**To**



To the  
R E A D E R.

*Courteous Reader,*

**T**hou canst not be such  
a stranger in our *Is-  
rael*, as to be igno-  
rant of my sufferings  
by the intrusion of *John Simp-  
son* into my Pulpit, and amongst  
my People: I doubt not but  
thou mayest well with many  
other enquire the reason of my  
resistance, the which is written  
in such *legible Characters*, that  
just men and zealous Christians  
cannot but *Run and Read them*;  
I have in a small Book, called  
*Right Re-entered*, given the  
world some account, as to my  
own

## To the Reader.

own personal Reasons, wherein had I been silent, can any that know *John Simpson*, a man subject to such windings and turnings, that he cannot to his own Profelytes appear to be the same this year he was the last : A man under judicial

\* Parliamentary

censure for his Er-

rors : a man by

the most sage

grave and pious

\* Ministers of this

City ( the place

of his Residence)

branded as a Seducer

from the Truth of Jesus

Christ ; a man for Sedition

( so owned by himself ) im-

prisoned , banished , and

afflicted , as an evil doer ;

a man of such violence, com-

motion , division , confusion,

distraction , disorder , that Bi-

shopsgate

\* The Com-

mittee for

Plundered Mi-

nisters.

\* London Te-

stimony to the

truth, &c.

shopsgate

## To the Reader.

*Shopsgate* and *Aldgate* must needs lament the day of his being in the midst of them. And yet enquire why should Master *Crofton* so much withstand *John Simpons* preaching; but if he or all his Adherents were (as they never can be) able to acquit him from these Blots that must needs render him unfit for Gospel-work: yet Master *Crofton* hath too too just cause to withstand his Ministry, not only for his unjust intrusion, and dis-ingenuous silence, under any propounded convenience for the people, and malicious exercise of his pretended Ministry, to the meer humoring of an envious, prophane Faction, pursuing nothing but Confusion and Disorder, not having any Assembly of his own to engage him to it. But for those Falshoods, that in the  
name

## To the Reader.

name of the Lord he doth utter to the *decrying* of Gods *holy Ordinances*, and danger of mens Salvation; herein he is frequent, and of which I shou'd (were it not that my weak people are apt to take boldness to sit under his Ministry from my hearing him) make a full detection: Can any man think Ministerial zeal, can in the least admit an *afternoons* contradiction, of a *forenoons* Doctrine of Truth. I have before noted to the world, that he no sooner violently entred my Church, and interrupted some of Gods Ordianances, but he presently vilifying, those he could not hinder, openly averred, that to learn a Catechism was not to worship God; you might as well take your children to the Market or Fair, and buy them Baubles, Rattles, and Hobby Horses as  
Cats-

## To the Reader.

*Catechisms*. I well know that he did with most prophane impudence in the Pulpit at Great *Al-hallows*; and in my own Pulpit make a dreadful appeal to God, Angels and Men, that he never Preached such Doctrine; but I have offered, and do yet offer, if he will be convicted before any competent Judges, to convince him by some of his late Profelytes, and many others that heard him speak it, and after most wickedly deny that he spake it; he must not think but we know the Serpentine wisdom of Seducers leads them to deny they spake the doctrine they divulge, if the time and other circumstances will not defend them in it. And yet in the Sermon wherein he would deny this notion, he doth but Familistically Spiritualize, and runs into this assertion

## To the Reader.

tion, which is yet Tantamount,  
That it is gross ignorance to say,  
or think that the teaching of Ca-  
techitrical heads of Religion is  
the way to bring any man to the  
knowledge of Christ. I confess  
this contempt of catechizing  
was in my ears, but a *praludi-  
um* to the decrying of *Infant  
Baptism*, which engaged me  
to attend his *Wednesday Le-  
ctures* for some few days, when  
he was from 1 Peter 3. 21.  
Treating of *Baptism*, wherein I  
heard many absurdities, false  
interpretations, and incongru-  
ous expressions uttered; but  
at length found him that pre-  
tends he had \* *run*  
*over the bogs of Fa-  
milism*, yet not to  
*have been swallowed*  
*up in them*, to have  
fallen up to the arm  
holes, if not over head and ears;  
for

\* His Book  
of Justifi-  
cation in  
the Epist. to  
the Reader.

## To the Reader.

for not only did he despise *Pædo-Baptism* by the contemptible terms of *Baby-sprinkling*, cozening *Infants*, and the like ; but proclaimed *Water-Baptism*, the very Ordinance it self, to be nothing worth ; and the *spirit inward Grace*, the answer of a good conscience, to be all in all, even unto communion with the *Church visible* ; and this he did in a full Discourse, half an hour long, directed to his own *Proselytes*, with many invectives against such as would not admit *Communion with the unbaptized in flesh* ; these nullifying notions of Gods Ordinance, I could not bear, and resolving they should not corrupt on my stomach, or he have liberty to make a false appeal, to God, Angels and Men, in the denial of what he had delivered, or to complain, I dealt not fairly by him,



## *To the Reader.*

him , publickly to render him  
erronious before *I* had charged  
him personally, *I* did on the day  
on which he preached it, being  
the 2. of *September* 1657. and  
vssoon as Sermon was ended,  
repaire to my Study , and writ  
unto him this Letter follow-  
ing.

Mr. Simpson,

*I did this day with no little trouble  
hear your Discourse , and pretermittig  
your incongruous, impertinent expres-  
sions, and misapplication of Scripture,  
with many Ordinance-degrading and  
Church-confounding speeches, you laid  
down this inference, That Baptisme is  
not the ground of communion with the  
Church, but real græce the answer of a  
good conscience, by the Resurrection  
of Christ from the dead : and there-  
fore you did declare, Though a man  
were altogether ignorant of the doctrin  
of Baptisme, and had never passed un-  
der that outward Ordinance, you  
could own him as a member of the  
Church, and hold communion with  
him, and admit him to all the Ordi-  
nances*

## To the Reader.

nances of Jesus Christ: and much to this purpose you delivered. Sir, When I consider, the answer of a good conscience is only known to God, I cannot believe God hath made it the Ground of communion with men, and outward Baptism to be the first Ordinance of God, to the Church and external Seal of the Covenant, and the very door of admission into the Church erected by Jesus Christ, and reckon'd by the Apostle among the *τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ Θεοῦ*; and so in all Ages of the Church made the foundation of the Church Ordinances in *Ioro Ecclesiæ*; I cannot consent to communion with such as are unbaptized, but must fear in this case, God may say to me as to them in Isa. 44. 7. For though outward baptism without inward Grace can carry no man to heaven, yet the Church cannot without palpable, profaneness administer other Ordinances of Communion to the unbaptized; I pray you tell me whether you do not in vain press me to outward Baptism, when you tell me, I may live and die in Communion with the body of Christ all my dayes, and yet never know the Doctrine, nor passe under the Ordinance of water-Baptism,

## To the Reader.

Baptism? Is Baptism become an Adia-phoron? These things I thus timely signify to you to prevent mistakes (desiring your arguments for your position (for that your Cited Scripture. Rom. 15. 7. doth not conclude it) but is farre wide) to which I promise you a speedy answer, unless they be convincing  
20

Zach. Croston.

Sept. 2 1657.

Though this letter was by a messenger sent of purpose, delivered into his hand, disingenious be never returned answer to it, either in publick or privat, but suffered these contemptible notions to abide on the spirit of the people, as if they were Gospel truths. Having observed his silence and resolving to leave him without excuse, I wrote unto him this second Letter.

Sir, I did this day sevenday signify my dissatisfaction in your Doctrine, and dislike of that old Familistical notion you published, I demanded your reasons but have received none. Sir, Think you not that it is your duty to convince gainsayers, or can I pass in silence, Baptisme-annihilating notions, I cannot,  
not,

## To the Reader.

not, I will not. Sir, I once more demand your arguments, and that as you are a man of any ingenuity will give an account of your Doctrine.

Seps. 9. 1657.

Zach. Crofton.

This also he received, but passed it in silence, and never to this day, gave any the least answer to defend or retract his error: If therefore I find him obstinate after the first and second admonition, I hope I shall not be blamed for rejecting him as an Heretick, and withstanding him from filling my Peoples Heads with low thoughts of Gods Ordinances, and the high Priviledges of Grace, whose tongues can already speak too despicably of them: God having in his Providence brought me to the Section of Baptism in my course of Carechizing, and given me a little breathing  
space

## *To the Reader.*

space from the violent persecutions of his Abettors, I thought it to be my duty to dictate to my people, *the dignity of Baptism*, and knowing that many heard his Error, who would not hear the correction of it. I have committed it to the Press, and sent it into publique view, submitting it and my opposition of the Seducer that occasioned it, to thy Censure, desiring thou mayest shake off prejudice, and read with seriousness and sobriety, whereby I doubt not but thou mayest finde profit; for which he prays, who seeth a Divine Stamp on every outward Gospel-Ordinance.

*Zach. Crofton.*



## ERRATA.

Page 4. line 23. for a read as. p. 23.  
l. 21. r. not so. p. 14. l. 2 r. me. p. 56.  
l. 4. r. readily gives. p. 58. l. 10. r. tribes,  
p. 87. l. 23. r. profane nations. p. 92.  
l. 11. r. answerably. p. 97. l. 23. r. in-  
veighing. p. 119. l. 19. r. juggle out.  
p. 136. l. 7. r. weight. p. 149. l. 7. r.  
third. p. 186. l. 4. r. humane.



A SHORT  
CATECHISM,  
BRIEFLY  
Propounding, and plainly  
shewing the  
VERTUE  
AND  
*Value of BAPTISM.*

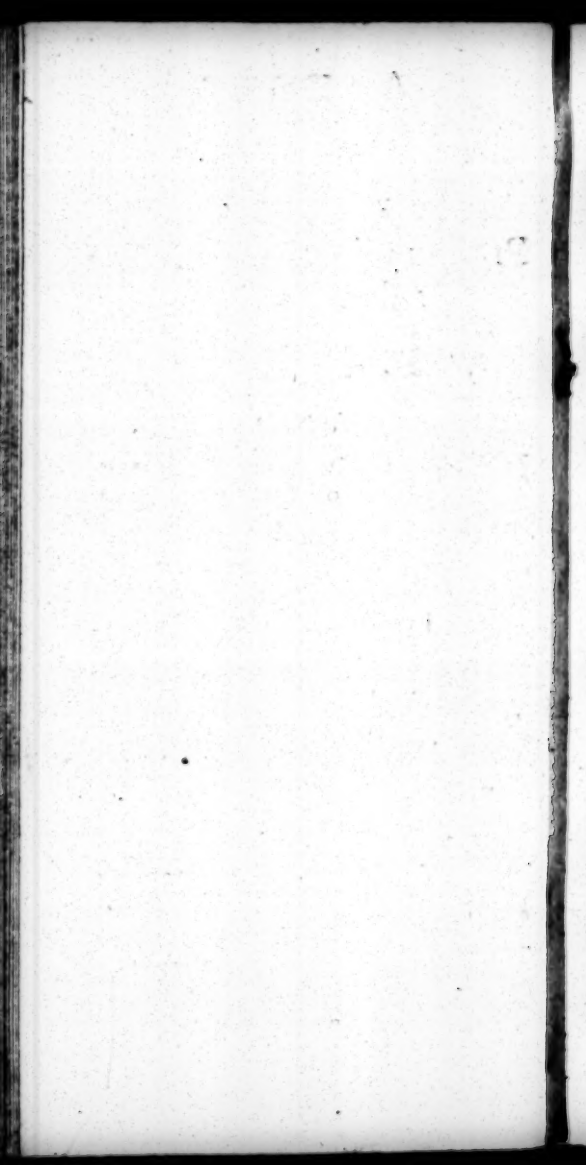
OR,  
The following ~~TREATISE~~  
fitted to the weak capacity of  
such People as desire to be  
confirmed in the *Nature and*  
*Necessity of BAPTISM,*  
against the Contempt and  
Neglect thereof.

---

By *Zachariah Cresson*, Minister at *Bol-  
tolph Algate, London.*

---

London, Printed by *D.M.* for *J. Nisbet*  
living in the Minories, 1658







A Short  
**CATECHISM,**

Briefly propounding,  
and plainly shewing  
the vertue and value of  
**BAPTISM.**

Q. **W** *What is your name?*  
Ans. M.

Q. *Who gave  
you this name?*

A. My Pa-  
rents, the natural Authors of my be-  
ing, and Instruments of my Interest  
in the Covenant of God.

Q. *When did they give you this  
name?*

A. In my Baptism, when I was de-  
dicated to God, and by the washing

of my body in pure water fitted for approach to him.

*Q. What is Baptism ?*

*A.* It is a solemn and Religious application of water by the hand of a lawfull Minister to fit subjects to signify the blood of Christ, and Seal the Covenant of Grace.

*Q. What is the outward sign in Baptism ?*

*A.* Water, in opposition to all other elements ; and pure water without any mixture or composition ; for so Christ did appoint, and his appointment doth stamp dignity on that despicable Element.

*Q. What is the inward Grace in Baptism ?*

*A.* The blood of Jesus Christ with its properties and effects, the remission of sin, and regeneration of the soul.

*Q. Is Baptism only a sign to represent these things to our minde ?*

*A.* No, but also a seal to ratifie them to our soul ; and therefore a right unto the Promise is the ground of Baptism, and Baptism a reason of our Faith in the Promise to be pleaded

ded in Prayer for obtainment.

*Q. What is the form of Baptism ?*

*A.* The Application of water, by Dipping, or Sprinkling; for the manner is of no moment, so it be done solemnly and religiously, as a sacred Ordinance by Divine Institution, with Prayer to God, and a Dedication of the person baptized, unto the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*Q. Who is to administer Baptism ?*

*A.* A lawful, and none but a lawful Minister; for Baptism is an act of Office and argument of Faith; therefore to be applied by authority; and then the Baptism of women, and private men is void and null.

*Q. Who are fit subjects to be baptized ?*

*A.* Such, all such, and only such as are in Covenant with God; for the qualification that must guide the Church in applying Baptism, must be *Interest in the Covenant*; and these are two sorts. 1. Infidels converted to the Faith. 2. The Infants of one or both Christian Parents.

*Q. By what must Infidels converted to the Faith be judged, within the Co-*

venant; and fit subjects to be baptized.

*A.* By making a profession of *sa-ving faith*, which may be done by men in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, not *sa-ving professi-on of faith*, importing *sincerity of grace*, nor by a well ordered conversation; for Gods Ministers must judge by a present visible sign, and they cannot search the heart: And Plants are to be set in the Church before we look for fruit; Baptism is a Bond unto amendment of life.

*Q.* *How can it be proved that the in-fants of Christian Parents are with in the Covenant and to be baptized?*

*A.* During the administration of Covenant in the times of the Old Testament, the natural issue of Gods people, before they acted their faith, even as soon as they were born, were within the Covenant. The form of the Promise is, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: Circumcision the Seal of the righteousness of faith, was set in their flesh at eight days old. God claims the natural issue of his Covenant-people as his own, when he

he calls them out of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 5. 1. chargeth them with duty, *Deut.* 14. 2. complaineth of Idolatay, *Ephes.* 16. 21. Chastiseth their sin, *Amos* 3. 2. And Christ calls the Jews natural, the *children of his Kingdom*, and placeth in them the Right to the mercies he brought, whilst the Gentiles were *Dogs licking up the crumbs*.

*Q. But what is the interest of Infants in the Old Testament to us under the new ?*

*A.* Very much ; for whilst we see they have been in Covenant, it will direct us to see a very clear *reversal* and plain limitation of the Covenant before we part with such a *birth-right and priviledge* ; for common Justice will not suffer us without good warrant to change a Fee-farm to our selves and heirs, for a Lease for term of Life ; and we need a clear reason to convert the Jews from the old Covenant, whereby they begot an *holy seed* to God, unto a straiter Covenant, that provides for the Parent, but leaves the child prophane, and estranged to God. The enemies of our Baptism, cry for an expresse command

to baptize Infants ; but instead of shewing any, we think we have good reason to say, we as such infants, have by a long Tenure an interest in the Covenant ; shew us a clear Gospel Writ of Ejection, if you think now to dispossess us.

*Q. But have you any good ground in the New Testament on which infants, as the natural issue of believing Parents may claim an interest in the Covenant?*

*A.* Yes, very much, when we consider little sucking Babes brought in arms to be received by the Lord Jesus to be blessed by him, to be declared members of the Kingdom of heaven, propounded as such who ought to be received in his name, as his disciples, and not to be offended ; all which are the blessings of the Covenant : and that the Apostle affirms of the *Gentiles ingrafted in*, as well as the *Jews cut off*, in *Rom. 9*. That if the first-fruits, then the whole lump is holy ; if the root, then the branches are holy ; and the branches do partake of the fatness of the olive : we must cast away our reasons if we see not  
In-

Infants interest in the Covenant.

*Q. But have you not yet some plain Scriptures to prove their title?*

*A.* Yes, the Apostle doth expressly say the Infants of one Christian Parent is holy, 1 Cor 7.14. of *real holiness* none understand it; *natural holiness* taking away the blot of *bastardy*, supposing Faith essential to Marriage is too ridiculous to be received, and then it must needs mean a *federal holiness* by the extent of the Covenant, and in the esteem of the Church. And in *Acts 2.38.* the Apostle saith expressly, *The promise is to you, and to your children*: This promise cannot be of extraordinary Gifts; because it is extended to all that shall be called; nor is it to children *when called*, for that were not to them as *children*: the Holy Ghost doth not use to speak non-sense, and express personal qualifications by terms of relation, but tells the believer, his children as his children have a privilege in the Covenant above other mens children; so that it is plain such Infants are within the Covenant, and according to their capacity to enjoy the

the Seals and Priviledges thereof.

*Q. But they are not capable of being baptiz'd, because they can act nothing in the Ordinance, nor can they make a profession of Faith, and Repentance.*

*A.* Nor is such capacity needfull; for profession gives no right to Baptism, but as an evidence of Covenant Interest: and their right to the Covenant, manifested by their *descent from such Parents* is as good a reason for their Baptism: and the subjects of the initiating Seal do not act any thing, as if God would thereby dictate, inability to action shall be no bar to Baptism.

*Q. But those we read of in Scripture that were baptiz'd were at grown years.*

*A.* So were those who were first circumcised; but that was occasional and circumstantial: The Church is founded in grown Trees, but is to be edified by infant branches.

*Q. But there is no institution for infant Baptism.*

*A.* That Baptism is instituted, cannot be denied. Age or Infancy are only directions to whom to apply it, and there-



therein the qualification of *Covenant Interest* is according to Scripture the clear direction. Moreover Infants may be Disciples, bearing on them the name of Christ, and are Members of Nations, and so the Institution, directing the baptizing of Discipled Nations, is to them extended.

*Q. But all you urge for infants baptism, is by way of inference and consequence.*

*A.* Scripture-Inference is Gods word, binding mans conscience: it was the way of Christ his convincing the Sadduces of the Resurrection, and of *Pauls* preaching at *Athens*, and is your only way to warrant womens Communion at the Lords Table, and shall it not be of force to Infants Baptism?

*Q. What benefit do you receive by your Baptism?*

*A.* Much, as I am baptized, and enjoy that Ordinance of God; and much as I was baptized in Infancy by the early enjoyment of it.

*Q. What is your benefit received by the Ordinance it self?*

*A.* A fit qualification to draw  
nigh

nigh to God with confidence.

*Q. What do you mean by drawing nigh to God ?*

*A.* Not only the possession of heavenly Glory when I die, which I deny not, but such may enjoy whom the providence of God cuts off before they can be baptized : Nor only the private and personal acts of the soul, which may be presented (though not with much confidence) acceptably to God before a man can be baptized after his Conversion, he not living in contempt or wilful neglect of Baptism ; but I mean an approach to God in the Assemblies of his people, to worship before him, as a Member of his Church, and one of his peculiar people, to bear his name in the world, and of his Royal Priesthood, to offer up acceptable Sacrifice, and enjoying all his Ordinances ; all which I do in assurance, having my body washed with pure water.

*Q. Is then Baptism the necessary qualification for approach to God ?*

*A.* Yes, it is so necessary that the unbaptized, may not appear in the Assemblies of his people. The way of Christ.

Christ his appearance in his Church as the Messiah was prepared by Baptism ; therefore *John* the promised *Elias*, is called *John* the *Baptist*. Baptism prepared Christ for his work of Mediatorship ; he neither prayed (that we read of) nor was tempted, nor preached, nor received the Testimony from heaven till he was baptized ; and if the head were thus sanctified, much more must the members : moreover Circumcision did sanctifie such as might come nigh to the Sanctuary, and Baptism hath succeeded in the room, signifies and seals the same Grace , and in all things serve to the same end in the Christian Church, that Circumcision did to the Jews.

*Q What is the use of Baptism, that it should so qualifie with confidence in access to God ?*

*A.* By Baptism I am visibly interested in Jesus Christ, *Gal.* 3. 27. incorporated into his Church. *1 Cor.* 12. 13. made a member of the household of Faith , and Common-wealth of Israel, consecrated unto God, *Eph.* 5. 26. having holiness stamped on my flesh, being

being sanctified by the washing of water by the word : And in Covenant with God, having the seal of the promise, whereby God is become mine, and I am dedicated to be his in faith and obedience, to God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost : All which are clear grounds of Faith, to be improved unto my encouragement in approach unto God.

*Q. Are all that are baptized partakers of these priviledges ?*

*A.* All that are baptized enjoy these Priviledges *Visibly and Sacramentally* in the judgement of the Church, by whose just censure they may be deprived of them, but not *Savingly and Sincerely* ; for to some the inward Grace is withheld from Gods outward Ordinance according to Gods holy purpose : And many not acting Faith to claim, lose the Priviledges sealed. Baptism is in its nature and efficacy the same to all, but by reason of the incapacity of some it is not always a like effectual.

*Q. What principles or practices are to be condemned as contrary to this use of Baptism ?*

*A. Ma-*

*A.* Many, as 1. Such as distate to the unbaptized a liberty of access to God; teaching that Baptism is not the ground of Communion with the Church visible, but real Grace, the answer of a good conscience, and thereon do tender all the Ordinances to the unbaptized, which is directly opposite to this use of the Ordinance, and inverts the Ordinance of the Gospel, giving God cause to complain, as once in Israel, Ezek. 44. 7. *Ye have defiled my Sanctuary by admitting into my Sanctuary the unbaptized in flesh and in spirit.*

*Q.* Who are further to be condemned as contrary to this consecrating nature of Baptism?

*A.* Such as disown their Baptism, in drawing nigh to God, as do some *Familists*, who deny all outward Ordinances and pretend to serve God altogether in Spirit, as if divided man could draw nigh to God; or the Lord would not be adored by the body he hath redeemed, or true Grace could admit a contempt of any divine Ordinance: Or the *Anabaptists* who are so irrational as to renounce their Baptism,

tism, because received in Infancy, as if a corruption in circumstance (if this were one) had destroyed the essence of the Ordinance; but indeed they do it out of ignorance, or obstinacy, deeming Gods Institution Superstition, and so run into the sin of Sacrilege.

*Q. Is the denial of Infants Baptism the sin of Sacrilege?*

*A.* Whilst it robs God of the children to him begotten, the Church of Members to her born, believing Parents of a ground of Faith, and reason of hope, and the Infants of their undoubted Interest in the Covenant, I cannot but deem it sacrileg.

*Q. Who else are to be blamed as repugnant to this consecrating nature of Baptism?*

*A.* Such as disregard Baptism in its application to others, as do Parents, who pass over their childrens Baptism as a Civil Complement, and meer Formality to please Friends, but never compose themselves to it as an act of Religion, and Ordinance of God; pray not for a blessing on it, nor praise God for the blessing of it; nor instruct

struct their baptized children in the benefit and use of it : and people who attend with some shew of reverence on other Ordinances, but rudely rush out of the Congregation when Baptism is administered, as if it were some idle action ; and as if the sanctifying of a soul to God, the sealing of the Covenant, and admission of a Member into the Church were of no use to them, nor worth their attendance.

*Q. Who else are to be blamed, as contrary to the nature of Baptism ?*

*A.* Such as disesteem their own Baptism, neither improving it against sin, nor arguing to themselves the duty or dignity of their Baptism, so as to make Baptism an Engagement against sin to holiness and encouragement of their Spirits in holy duties.

*Q. Who also are to be blamed as contrary to the consecrating nature of Baptism ?*

*A.* Such as deny the Baptized the liberty of access to God in the Assemblies of his people, as do the Independents who gather Churches out of Churches rightly constituted, and call the Baptized into Church way, as  
if

if they were out, and prescribe a Covenant of their own, whereby to admit Churchmembers, & affect to distinguish themselves from others Baptized, by the term of Saints, Brethren, Church, and the like, and deny to communicate with them, as if Baptism did not incorporate into Christ his Body, and prepare for communion with him in his Ordinances.

*Q. To what course of life doth your Baptism bind you?*

*A.* To depart from all iniquity, to devote my self wholly to the Faith and Service of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to whom I am dedicated, and all my days to demean my self as a member of Christ his Church, one in Covenant with God, on whom holiness is stamped, and that is sanctified for approaches to him.

*Q. You spake of some benefit you reaped by your being Baptized in Infancy; Is the early enjoyment of this Ordinance of any advantage?*

*A.* Yes, very much in many things to be preferred before Baptism of grown persons wherein it is more profitable.

*Q. What*



*Q. What is the first benefit of Infant Baptism ?*

*A.* Infant Baptism *expresseth clearly the sin of nature*, and engageth against it : in that we are washed, it is evident we are unclean, but being so soon baptized, doth witness our very nature is defiled ; for infancy did never admit us to be stained with personal guilt as are men at years ; and so Infant Baptism is an unanswerable argument of our inbred corruption against which we are bound to fight, being baptized before it had spread it self into actual sin.

*Q. What is the second benefit of Infant Baptism ?*

*A.* It *explaineth the method, and order of transmitting the Covenant*, and *affecteth us with the benefit of Relation to a believing Parents*. That we are baptized speaks us in Covenant ; but that we are so soon baptized before we have in our selves any qualification for it, shews us as branches, we partake of the fatness of the olive, and are of the same kinde with our Parents : God hath graciously become the God of the Believer and his

his Seed, and made grace to run through natures channel, otherwise we had never enjoyed this Privilege.

*Q. What is a third benefit of Infant Baptism?*

*A. It enlargeth the bounds, and establisheth the being of the Church.* Baptism is the band of union, and Ordinance of ingrafting into the Church: But Infant Baptism doth scatter the holy seed, and send forth sprouting branches, which succeeding into the room of old perishing stocks, doth not only increase the number of the Churches Members, but defend it from the wasting annihilating breaches of time.

*Q. What is the fourth benefit of Baptism?*

*A. It exciteb Repentance,* representing sin in its Root and Original, the pravity of nature; and its gracious object, the God of our Fathers, and the God of our youth, against whom we have offended.

*Q. What is the fifth benefit of Infant Baptism?*

*A. It enforceb Faith, not only in the*

the sealing, but also the extending of the Covenant to the seed of Believers, a ground of Parental Prayer for Posterity, and an early seizure of our souls, before Satan could possess us, or our own corrupt nature could betray us unto him.

*Q. What is the sixth benefit of Infant Baptism?*

A. It *engagerth duty*; Parents to Christian education and instruction of those, who by their Authority are dedicated to the service of the true God, children to the obedience of the God of their Father, and of their youth, who extended to them the Covenant, and so soon set the seal of it in their flesh.

*Q. What is the seventh benefit of Infant Baptism?*

A. It *encourageith under death*; the knowledge of the Covenant, extended unto Believers and their seed, hath prepared young children unto Martyrdom, and interest in the Covenant can be the only ground of hope to the Parents under the death of their Infants, who are born the children of wrath, but by Baptism are put into  
the

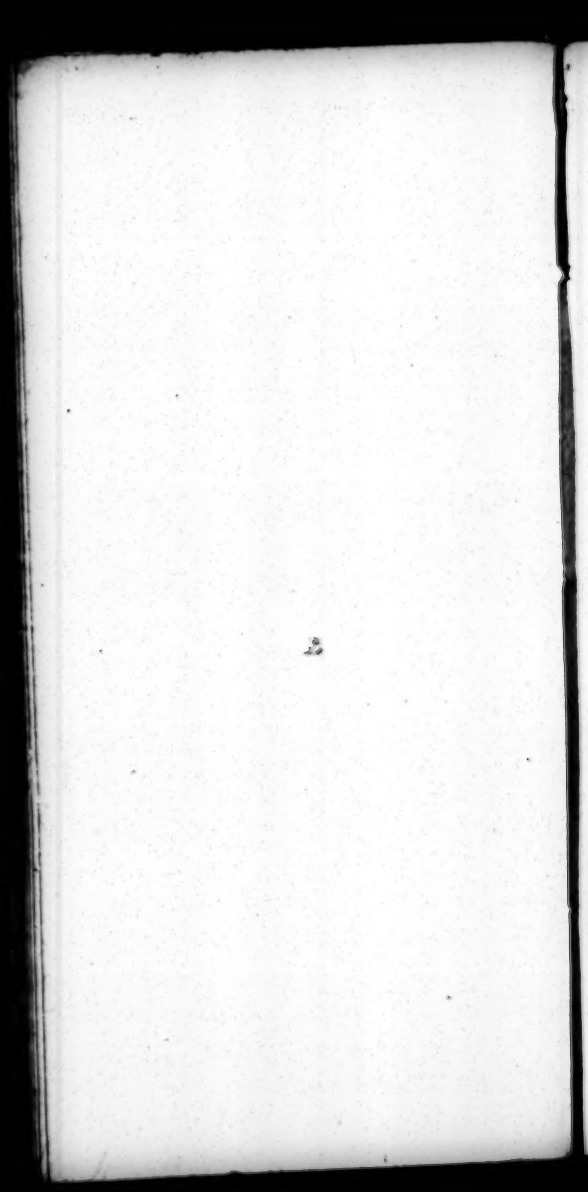
the ark of salvation; such as let go this must clear themselves by a dream of childrens immunity from all guilt, and so cannot be damned : Or a Popish *Limbus Infantum*, or some unusual way of comfort the Scripture doth not warrant.

*Q. May not these benefits redound to such as are baptized in grown years ?*

A. No, in no wise, for such see not the extent of the Covenant to Believers and their seed, nor the serviceableness of Relation natural in businesses of salvation, nor do they enjoy the same; and therefore it is our great happiness, that we are not only Baptized, but Baptized in Infancy, under all the advantages that either Ordinance or season can afford us.

**FINIS**

h  
e  
t  
-  
-  
y  
t  
-  
r  
-





THE  
VIRTUE and VALUE  
OF  
**BAPTISME,**

Delivered in a Summary  
Sermon at the close of the Cate-  
chetical Considerations of the  
Doctrine of Baptism, at  
*Botolphs Aldgate,*  
L O N D O N.

---

T E X T.

Heb. 10. ver. 22. (the last words)  
— *And our bodies washed with  
pure water.*



HE Author of this  
Epistle intending a  
Confirmation of the  
Christianized Jews in  
the Faith they had received, and ad-  
B mi-

administration of the Goipel to which they were subjected, doth assert *Jesus Chrst to be the true Messiah*, both in respect of *Person*, as he is *God-Man-Mediator*, and his *Offices*, as *Prophet, Priest and King*, and opposeth him unto all those Levitical Rites whereby he was typified, plainly declaring that the appearance of the Substance put a period to all those Shadowie Ceremonies whereby they had worshipped God; and necessitated another manner of administration of Gods Covenant and Worship, fit to shew that *the Messiah was come, and no longer to be expected*. Which having by clear Demonstrations confirmed in the 19 verse of this chapter, he enters upon the Application of this Doctrine, which he manageth by,

1. Stating the principle proved, as granted and agreed on, v. 19, 20, 21.

2. Spe-



*Value of Baptisme.* 3

2. Special Inference of Duty, v. 22.

In the Inference we are to note three things,

1. The Duty Inferred, *Let us draw near.*

2. The Dictated Qualifications of such as must draw near, and they are two, *The heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, the body washed with pure water.*

3. The directed manner of drawing nigh to God, *With a true heart, in the full assurance of Faith.*

I intend not a full Consideration and therefore shall not insist on a full Comment upon the whole verse, but confine my self only to the words propounded; and we see they are the Dictated quality of such as are required to draw nigh to God upon the account of the

High Priest , and liberty of entrance into the Holy place ; and therefore is to be Grammatically Read , Ἐρραντισμένοι καὶ λευμένοι προσερχώμεθα, *We sprinkled and washed, let us draw neer, &c.* and herein there is among Expositors no difference : but the difficulty is in the Interpretation of the words ; many of our modern Expositors differing from the Antients in the same , the last understanding *the Sacrament of Baptisme* to be the qualification here spoken of ; the former, Externall Sanctity, by way of allusion unto Baptisme : the difference is not much, for if all Externall Sanctity be here intended, then *Baptisme* , and if the order of Sanctity be to be observed, *it has*   
 + *first*, as it where External Sanctity must begin , yet my judgement

*Value of Baptisme.* 5

ment leads me to the interpretation of the Antients, and such later Expositors as follow their steps; and so I understand by the body washed with pure water, *the Person Baptized* or qualified by due subjection to the Sacrament of Baptisme, and hereunto I am guided 1. *by the opposition of it, to the heart sprinkled*, which intends the reall Sanctification of the whole Man; and is so interpreted in the 9 ch. 14.v. whilst the washing of the body signified Externall Sanctification, alwayes in use among the Jewes, and is so used by the Apostle, Eph. 5. 26. *Sanctified by the washing of water*; as Expositors do agree. So the opposition in this Text seems to me, to distinguish the inward grace, and outward signe in dictating the Gospell

B 3 order

order of access to God, to be by Baptisme of water on the body and blood, or Grace on the heart : and is the same with that in 1 Peter 3.21. Baptisme that now is, saves us, not the washing of water, but the answer of a good Conscience.

2. By the occasion, which seemes to me to have been the preventing answer of an objection, that might well be propounded by the Jewes thus, You have put a period to all holy Rites, and laid all the Administrations of the Covenant according to Moses in the dust, and tell us positively that they which serve the Tabernacle must not eat at your Altar, (Heb. 13.10.) nor enjoy with you the Priviledges of Grace; we well know God is a Holy God, and will be sanctified

## Value of Baptisme

‘*Elified in such as approach un-*  
‘*to him ; and the uncircumci-*  
‘*sed in heart or in flesh may*  
‘*not come nigh unto him ,*  
‘*Ezek 44.9. nor enter into his*  
‘*Sanctuary ; what order or out-*  
‘*ward ordinance of Sanctifica-*  
‘*tion is then prescribed in our*  
‘*approaches to God ? To*  
which the Apostle answereth ,  
in stead of Circumcision of heart  
and flesh under the old , you  
must according to the direction  
of the New Covenant and the  
Gospell worship , draw near  
to God *with an heart sprinkled*  
*from an evil Conscience, and a bo-*  
*dy washed with pure water, which*  
will be to you a ground of full  
assurance, which all the Cere-  
monies of the Law could not  
Create unto you. So that the  
words seem not to me to be at  
all strained: but of their own  
B 4 selves.

selves by a genuine Interpretation, thus to speak, that the outward signe and inward Grace of Baptisme are the onely qualifications of such as will in full assurance of Faith draw nigh to God in Gospell administrations, and the priviledges of the new Covenant; and in this sense and exposition I stand not alone, for *Aretius* saith expressely, *Corpora Nostra debent esse abluta aqua pura*, hoc est, *Baptismo Christi debemus esse initiati*: Our bodies washed with pure water, that is, we ought to be initiated by the Baptisme of Christs appointment. And *Paras.* saith *Intelligimus nos intus sanguine & spiritu Christi purgari, foris quod Baptismo ablui corporibus: ad Sacramentum enim Baptismi Apostolus respicere videtur: Par. in Loc. We understand*

stand.

## *Value of Baptisme. 9*

*stand an inward sprinkling of the Conscience with the Blood and Spirit of Christ, and an outward washing the body by Baptisme; for the Apostle looks on Baptisme.*

The words thus explained, do plainly present to our observation, and consideration, this point of Doctrine.

*Doctr. Baptisme, or Washing of the Body with pure Water, is a special qualification that fits us for confident approach to God.*

In the prosecution of this Doctrine, I shall explaine, confirme, and apply it with all convenient brevity.

In the explication we are to enquire what is Baptisme?

2. What 'tis to approach to God with confidence?

For the first, I shall not stand upon the acceptations of the  
B 5 word.

10. *The Vertue and*

word Baptisme, nor trouble you with the various senses in which 'tis used: but taking it in its vulgar acceptation, as it denominates a Gospell ordinance and eminent piece of Gods worship, you may receive of it this description.

*Baptisme is a Solemn and Religious application of water, by a lawfull Minister to a fit Subject; to the signifying of the Blood of Christ, and its cleansing property, and the Sealing of the Covenant of Grace.*

In this description I will not trouble you with a logicall distribution of it, into its parts: but propound these conclusions as helpfull to your understanding of it.

Conclusion 1. *Water is the outward sign and matter of Baptisme.*



## *Value of Baptisme.* 117

*tisme* ; water and no other Element ; pure water without Popish mixture , or Composition with oyle , creame , spittle , or the like ; for this and this only Element the Lord appointed , and his appointment stamps on the use of it , *Dignity and Authority* , and justly checks the curiosity of such as are subject to contemne the simplicity of the Element , and advance the dignity of the Ordinance by their own dall , but daring inventions : and yet water being an Element , cooling heat , quenching thirst , of common use , and easie purchase , and cleansing all filthiness ; doth fitly represent unto our minds the cooling and refreshing efficacy , the plenty and easie purchase , together with the purifying property

Perty of the Blood of Christ.

Conclus. 2. *A* *solemn* and *Religious* application of the water must be the form of Baptisme; That water be applied to the Subject is the essentiall act of Baptisme, the manner of its application, *by dipping or sprinkling*, is to be guided by discretion and conveniency; though we deny not *dipping* to have been used in the Primitive Churches, in the hot Eastern Countries, where with safety and conveniency it might be used; and we grant (all other things concurring) *dipping* to be a lawfull application of the water, yet it is not essentially and indispensably necessary, as the Anabaptists do too zealously contend: but it is both lawfull and sufficient that the water be *ponred or sprinkled* on the

*Value of Baptisme.* 13

the Subject which hath been the allowed practise of the Church; and the word *Baptiz.*, *signifying* any kind of washing, by sprinkling, pouring on, or dipping: and the measure, or quantity of water being no more essentiall to Baptisme then of Bread and Wine to the Lords Supper, will allow it; and the Holy Ghost mentioneth the blood of Christ as Cleansing by *sprinkling* 1 Pet. 1. 2. by way of allusion to this act in Baptisme, as the analogie thereof: and it is more then probable that Baptisme in houses, as was that of the Jaylor, *Act.* 16. 33. was Administred by sprinkling or pouring on, not by dipping; and the weakness of Children, and coldness of our climate is a just Reason for this manner of Application;

# 14      *The Vertue and*

cation; so that either of these may be used without contenti-  
on.

Water what way soever, must be *Solemnly and religiously ap-  
plied* in the holy form, and with the holy Rites which God hath appointed; for every common washing or application is not *Baptisme*: but *water con-  
secrated* by the word of insti-  
tution and prayer; and as an *act of worship* to God, and *ar-  
gument of faith* applied in the *name* (that is by the appoint-  
ment, and to the dedication of the person Baptized to faith in, and holy profession) of *Father Son and Holy Ghost*; is the Sacrament of Baptism; so that as the Apostle doth well check the horrid prophaneness of such as deemed the common eating of bread, and drinking of wine

*Value of Baptisme.* 15

to be the Lords Supper, by declaring *The Cup of blessing which we blesse* is the Communion of the blood of Christ, and *the Bread which we break* is the Communion of the body of Christ, 1 Cor. 10. 16. thereby pointing unto the solemne and Religious Rites which must distinguish the Lords Supper from common eating and drinking; so the Solemne and Religious Application of water distinguisheth the Sacrament of Baptisme from all other common washing.

Conclus. 3. *Baptisme must be administred by a lawfull Minister*; this water may not be applied by every or any private hand; the Lord Jesus hath joyned it in Commission *with teaching and discipling*, so that such only that have the Authority.

thority of the one have the Authority of the other; Baptisme is on all hands agreed on to be an *act of office* and Authority, and not to be given by men out of office; it is a *Seal* which must be *stamped* (not by a childish impression: but) *with Power and Authority*, to make it valid, a *ground of faith*, pleadable in prayer; so that the Baptisme of women and private Persons (on what pretended necessity soever it be) is wicked and prophane; nay in my judgement is void and null, and not to be salved with a *quod fieri non debuit factum valet*, that *unlawfull things are valid when past and done*; though I cannot with the Donatists grant that the efficacy of the Ordinance depends on the dignity of the Administrator, yet

I.

*Value of Baptism* 17

I cannot but believe that the *Authority of the instructor* is essentiall to every Gospell Ordinance to the Church, and must be found in every Administrator; Ordained Ministers must give us Sacraments, I and preach the Word too if we will not be cheated of Salvation, and content our selves with mock Ordinances; my muddy brains could never yet conceive the God of Order to make Office and Authority essentiall to politicall transactions in Kingdomes and Commonwealths, and yet to leave his Church in such confusion, that the great Affaires of Salvation shall be dispenced by every common hand; as if his care were more for the world then the Church, which if it be, I will never go to the House of  
God.

18      *The Vertue and*

God to behold the beauty of his Holiness, which shines more brightly in the wide Wilderness.

Conclus. 4. *Baptisme must be administred unto fit subjects*: all Subjects sate not the Ordinance; Creatures insensible and irrationall are incapable of the Grace of God, and these holy Administrations thereof; the baptizing of Bels, Churches, Fonts, &c. is a piece of Consecration, neither prescribed nor allowed in the New Testament; but to be damned as prophane and superstitious; they must be the subjects of Life and Reason that will lie in the least Capacity of Grace and Holiness, and such are the Sons of men.

Sons of men are Subjects capable of Grace and Holiness:



*Value of Baptisme.* 19

nesse: but the speciall dispensations thereof in the Covenant of Grace, and its Seales, calls for speciall qualifications; and therefore Baptisme may not be given to men as men, and meerely the sons of *Adam*, no, they must first be the *seed of Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 13.* for the *Covenant of God* must be in their flesh, and by Preaching they must be *discipled* into the Christian Church, and see that the *Promise* is to them and to their *Children* before they be Baptized *Act. 2. 38, 39.* for Baptisme must be the *Seale of the Righteousness of faith*, which we have being not yet Baptized, *Rom. 4. 11.* so that the fit Subjects for Baptisme must be not only men, but *Federati*, such as *Covenant with God*, to whom the *Promise* may be judged.

Judged to belong: they must be made Christians, and lay hold on the Covenant of God, and then be Baptised; I could drive out of your common discourse an ordinary terme relating to Baptisme (*viz such a one is Christned*) if I did not hope you well understand it: Baptisme may *Christianum dicere*, declare and pronounce a man a Christian: but it doth not *Christianum facere*, make a Christian; if your Children be not made Christians by the extent of the Covenant to believers and their seed, bring them not to me to be Baptized; most cursedly prophane was the cruelty of the *Spanish* Papists in *America*, who with whips and scourges drave the unchristianized untaught *Indians* to the Fonts to be Baptized; for that

Bap-

*Value of Baptisme.* 21

Baptisme belongs to none but Christs disciples, and Covenant People.

Baptisme belongs to *all Christs Disciples and Gods Covenant People*, so that none of them may without sin, nay sacriledg be barred from Baptisme; and these are resolved into two ranks, and known by two names in the Church (*viz*) *Infidells converted to the faith, and the Infants of one or both Christian Parents*: These two are the orders into which Gods fæderates have been Ranked, ever since Gods Covenant was established, and his Church was estated in *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and their seed: as to the first of them, they are on all hands consented to as fit and proper Subjects, onely our over-pious age hath

hath started the quarry, How  
and when they must be judged  
converted to the faith? which  
I must needs resolve to be by a  
*profession of saving faith*, not  
*the saving Profession of faith*,  
and possession of sincere Grace  
which the Congregating Ana-  
baptists call for; sincere grace  
and saving Profession must be  
the soules care, and ground of  
joy: but cannot be the signe  
that shall guide the Church in  
giving the Sacrament of Bap-  
tisme; *as soon as they professed  
to believe, Philip Preaching the  
things of God, and the name of  
Jesus Christ, they were Bapti-  
zed both men and women, Act.*  
8. 12. Philip required no more  
of the *Eunuch* in v. 37. and  
when I hear Peter declared Si-  
mon the Sorcerer to be after his  
Baptisme in the Gall of bitter-  
ness,

*Value of Baptisme.* 23

ness, and bond of iniquity, as  
v. 23. I perceive they in whose  
company he was Baptized yield-  
ed no more; and when I re-  
member *Ananias* and *Saphi-  
ra*, *Demas*, and other Baptized  
Persons proved hypocrites and  
reprobates; I cannot believe  
they possessed *sincere Grace*,  
or made a *saving Profession*,  
though they professed *saving  
Faith*; I cannot yet turn *Ar-  
minian* and believe true Grace,  
may be finally and totally lost,  
and a man may be a child of  
God to day, and a child of the  
Devill to morrow; I have not  
faith enough to believe that  
when God made me a *Mini-  
ster*, he made me a *God*, and  
endowed me with the pro-  
perty of to searching the heart:  
nor have I wit enough to  
conceive that God making me a  
Stew-

## 24 *The Verine and*

Steward of his Misteries, prescribes to my as my guide the qualification of subjects, which lies beyond my knowledg. I believe the grosse enormities of many baptized Saints (as they call themselves) hath convinced them, that true Grace is not within their sight, but they may and have baptized hypocrites: why then do they call for that qualification God hath not directed and they can not discern? God hath made the tongue the trumpet of the heart, and I can better hope men will not play the hypocrite and make that utter an uncertain sound, then I can know the sincerity of their Grace.

Though Infidels converted to the Faith be generally resolved within the Covenant, yet

yet since the dayes of *Balthazar Pacimontanus*, (who pretending to have derived his fancy from *Luther*, constrained *Luther* to write against him in the year of our *Lord*, 1527.) The Right of Infants to the Covenant of God, and consequently their capacity for Baptisme hath been called in question, and of late yeares hath met with most high and violent (though irrational and unscripturall opposition) wherein I cannot but admire at the erroneous industry of the *Antipædobaptists*; to curtail Gods Covenant, cut off their seed from the priviledges of Grace, and cast away their own reasons, blinding their eyes against plaine demonstrations of Scripture, and the Antient enjoyments of the Church; where-

in we must see better warrant before we strike hands with them, and be of their uncharitable believe,; for if I know any thing of the method of Gods Covenant, or in the least how to Reason from Scriptures, It is as cleare as the Sun that the Infants of believing Parents, Gods Covenant People, whilst Infants, and as their naturall seed are Gods federates, and within his Covenant, and so fit Subjects of Baptisme.

In politicall and all civill transactions of men, we find all the world over that Covenants made from or to parents, do usually include children as their children, so that by that very relation, without any new formall contract, they claime Priviledges, and stand bound  
to



*Value of Baptisme.* 27

to duty; and when I consider Gods way of dealing to be according to mans capacity and humane method, I have no ground on which to imagine that he hath inverted the order, and cut off Relation in the conveying of the privileges of Grace, and constituting a peculiar People to himselfe; for Gods speciall dispensations do ordinarily run in the same Channell, though not with the same Latitude that his Generall Providences do: and then when God after the manner of men assumes to himselfe a Kingdom, without doubt he confers Honours on and looks for Loyalty from his subjects, and their seed or off-spring, who as their seed are born heires of such Honour and duty.

Further in all the transacti-

ons of God with man ever since he had a being, the Covenant hath extended to his seed, as his seed, without any personall qualification, all that know any thing of Gods dealing with *Adam*, know the Covenant of works was made to him for himselfe, and his seed as they were his naturall seed, he received priviledges for himselfe and them, and so he lost them, and by one *mans disobedience we were all made sinners*; if this were Gods method in the Covenant of works, we must have good reasons to make us believe it is altered in the extent and Administration of the Covenant of Grace: but not to stand on Generall equity and demonstrations, the Scripture doth by plain and clear instances in both Old and New Testament

*Value of Baptisme.* 29

stament evidence the children of men under the Covenant of Grace, to be also in Covenant as they are their naturall issue; There is nothing plainer in Scripture then that when the Covenant of Grace was established in *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, it was extended to their naturall seed; *their children, as their children even in infancy*, and before they attained to any *Personall qualifications* were in Covenant, and the children of God; This is expressed in the very form of the Covenant, *Gen. 17. 7. I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*: This is evidenced by Circumcision, the Seale of the Covenant set in their flesh on this very ground, and that at eight dayes old, whilst infants, unable to

any personall acts of *Abrahams* faith, and it must needs be most grosse ignorance to say that Circumcision Sealed to the naturall issue of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* the land of Canaan and Promise thereof, but not the Covenant of Grace, whilst the matter sealed, and very ground on which every man-child must be Circumcised, is expressly declared to be, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*: whilst the Holy Ghost tells us Circumcision was the *seale of the Righteousness of faith*, which is the Covenant of Grace, *Rom. 4. 11.* and Circumcision was set on the flesh of the Profelyted Gentiles, who never claimed nor possessed by the vertue thereof, any portion of Canaan the land of Promise; so that if  
this

this were the onely matter Sealed by Circumcision, it did to them. Seale a blank, and they had by it no benefit; again, God doth lay an eminent claime to the naturall issue of the Jewes, in their very Apostasies from him, when he calls them out of *Egypt*; he doth it with an especial claime, *Let my People go*, *Exod. 5. 1.* when he chargeth them with duty, he enforceth it with relation, *ye are the children of the Lord your God*, *Deut. 14. 1.* when he chides their abominable Idolatry, he aggravates it by the sacriledg, owning his own title, *Thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters which thou hast born unto me, and sacrificed, &c.* Thou hast slain my Children, and delivered them to cause them to passe through the fire; for

## 32      *The Vertue and*

them in *Ezek.* 16. 20, 21. When he chastiseth them, he comes to them as a Father, *Ye children of Israel you onely have I known as mine*, therefore I will visit you for your iniquities, *Amos.* 3. 1, 2. and when he comes to deliver them from afflictions, their sins provoke to continue; the Covenant made with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* is the onely cogent reason thereunto; this is pleaded as the prevalent argument and ground of faith in prayer, *Exod.* 32. 14. *Isa.* 64. 9. And affectionately resented by the Lord, *Levit.* 26. 42. *Ezekiel* 16. 59, 60. *I might deal with thee as thou hast done when thou didst despise the Oath in breaking the Covenant, nevertheless I will remember my Covenant made with thee in the dayes of thy youth;*

*Value of Baptisme.* 33

*youth*: when I consider this carriage of God toward Israel according to the flesh, I cannot without blasphemy but think God to be more just then to lay such a speciall claime under the series of his dispensation towards Israel, if by his Covenant with their Fathers he had not a cleare and unquestionable title to the posterity: and it is to me a most senselesse and dull evasion, to say that Israel were Gods People by right of Creation as *wool, and hempe, and flax* are his, whilst he himselfe tells us, he had chosen them to be a precious People unto himselfe, above all people that are upon the earth, Deut. 14. 2. and you only have I known above all the families of the earth. Amos 3. 2. Where doth God say of any Nation they

### 34. *The Vertue and*

are my people Israel excepted, and is not the transmission of the Covenant to the Gentiles, that which makes them who were not a People, to be the People of the living God? and unto this it may further be added that our Saviour in the very rejection of the Jewes, when he declares them to be of their father the devill denieth them not to be the children of *Abraham* (*John 8*) nay, declareth them to be *Children* in the Right to the Grace he brought into the world, in comparison of whom the Gentiles are called *dogs*, *Mat. 15. 26.* Nay, and ownes them as children of the Kingdome of Heaven, *Mat. 8. 11.* And *St. Paul* lamenting the rejection of his Kinsfolke, aggravates their present miseries by their past mercies,  
Reck-



reckoning up their priviledges  
*Adoption, Glory, Covenant's,*  
*Oracles, the giving of the Law,*  
*the Service of God, the Promi-*  
*ses, the Fathers, and the coming*  
*of Christ concerning the flesh,*  
(but not a word of Canaan, the  
great dreamed of Priviledge  
in *Anabaptist* view) and de-  
termines these belonged not to  
*Israel* heires of *Abrahams*  
faith, but to *Israel* his kins-  
folk according to the flesh, even  
the naturall issue of *Abraham*  
*Isaac* and *Jacob*.

By all this, and much more  
that hath been said by others,  
and might be by me, it is more  
then manifest, that during the  
dispensations of the Covenant  
under the Law, and to the Jewes  
the children of Gods Covenant  
People, even as their children  
and without personall acts of  
faith

saith were in Covenant with God, and subjects capable of the initiating Seale thereof; and me thinks under the Gospell if (as undoubtedly it is) the Covenant be substantially the same, though ministerially different: men should have more reason then to release such a priviledge without a very plain and clear reversall in the New Testament, and limitation of the Covenant to adult and actuall believers, which my dimme sight could never yet read, nor dull brain conceive: and more justice to themselves and Posterity then, if it be at their choice, to change a Fee-farm to themselves and heires for ever, for a Lease for a terme of life, and meere personall title; sure I am my little honesty would act me with such foolish selfe love:.

*Value of Baptisme.* 37

love : more regard to the rejected Jew, who are yet the beloved of God according to Election *for the Fathers sake*, Rom. 11. 28. And in hope to be Re-implanted into the Olive from which they were cut off ; can we with any confidence count them to a new Covenant with straiter termes ? Shall we not earnestly emulate and highly provoke them to receive the Gospell, by bidding them to their losse ? will not ingenuity engage them thus to retort ?  
' why do you perswade me to  
' turn Christian ? as I am a Jew  
' I beget Children to the Lord,  
' and bring forth an Holy seed ;  
' the Priviledges of the Covenant is entailed on me, and on  
' my Naturall issue, and therefore the Covenant of God is  
' set on the flesh of my child  
assoon

‘ soon as born; whereas if I  
‘ turne Christian, I bring forth  
‘ children of wrath; and beget  
‘ children to the God of the  
‘ world: I have indeed a Perso-  
‘ nall right to the Covenant, and  
‘ am provided for during my  
‘ own life, but my children are  
‘ turned into the wide world, to  
‘ sink or swim, & shift for them-  
‘ selves, without any speciall Di-  
‘ vine Protection; is not a poor  
‘ pittance with perpetuity bet-  
‘ ter then more large enjoy-  
‘ ments with so short a tenure?  
‘ never tell me of a better Testa-  
‘ ment on such tickle termes:  
O the hopes the hopes of  
England to convert the late in-  
let Jewes; their new inhabi-  
tants! by such narrow and  
Honourable treaty, and tenders  
of Grace and Salvation.

*Lastly, Me thinks men calling  
them-*

*Value of Baptisme.* 39

themselves Saints should have more Religion then to restrain the Grace God hath extended to themselves and feed; and curtaile the Covenant that by the New Testament is conferred on the Believer and his issue naturall, even as his child in infancy, and before he acts any Personall faith: when I consider *little infants* sucking the breasts, and brought in armes, not able to go, *received by our Lord Jesus Christ* by him *blissed* and *pronounced* with others of the like kind to be of the *Kingdome of Heaven*, and *propounded* not onely as examples of meekness and humility, but as *objects of charity and observation*, not to be *offended*, but awfully received because Christs name is plaeced on them, and they are made his disciples, so as that  
the

the receiving such a little child must be deemed the receiving of Christ; and the offending one of these little ones, a dolor more dangerous then a milstone hanged about his neck and being cast into the Sea; *Matth. 18. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Mark. 10. 14. Luk. 18. 16.* And when I consider the Apostles position of the latitude of Sanctity, not onely to the Jewes the naturall branches, but the Christianized Gentiles accidentall branches, wilde by nature, but ingrafted in, and partaking of the fatness of the Olive, plainly affirming of both, *if the first fruits were holy so is the whole lump, if the root be holy so is the branches,* *Rom. 11. 16.* And I here by the way observe that from these priviledges the naturall branches

es.

es were, and accidentally may be cut off.

Lastly, When I consider the Apostles clear and serious resolve to the case of Conscience propounded by the Corinthians concerning their children born of an Infidel (not adulterous parent) *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. The Anabaptist will not let us understand in this place *Real holiness*; nor do we desire it; and until that they have made it to appear that Faith is essential to Marriage (which will put marriage in a good tendency to a Sacrament, and please the Church of Rome) it is too ridiculous to understand a *natural holiness*, I mean Legitimacie and acquittance from the blot of Bastardie, and then

then I am constrained to understand a Fœderal holiness in the extent of the Covenant and esteem of the Church. These things, I say, considered, I must pluck up my reason by the very root if I do not by undeniable consequence constrain my conscience to believe and preach this point of Doctrine, (*viz*) *In New-Testament times under the Gospel-administration of the Covenant of Grace, the natural issue, or infants of believing parents are in covenant with God, and under the promises of salvation. And when I look upon Peters encouragement to the converting Jews to believe and be baptized, for the promise is to you and to your children, even to all that are a far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call, Act. 2, 38, 39.*

I



*Value of Baptisme.* 43

I must renounce my Grammar and little skill in reading plain English, with the least of understanding, if I do not read, *Believing Jews and their children, and also believing Gentiles and their children, have that interest in the Promise that may be to them a Ground of Faith, and confer on them a Right to Baptism.* And the Anabaptist glosse that the promise was of extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost (for these are not extended to all that are a far off when God doth call them, nor created they any right to Baptism, for many time they follow this Sacrament) or that children, when called to the faith of the Parent, should have the right to the Promise (for that is to them as called, nor as children,  
And

## 44      *The Vertue and*

And my mind is very foggie, I am much out if this terme of Relation do not dictate a Priviledge and Propriety by virtue of relation which children of such parents as children should enjoy, above what children of other parents did or could enjoy ) is too short a Fescue to make me read otherwise.

Thus then it doth fully and plainly appear, that under Old and New Testament administrations of the Covenant of Grace, the infants of believing parents are *Fœderati* within the Covenant, and so fit and proper subjects of baptism to be baptized. Nor is their incapacity of making a vocal profession of Faith any bar to their baptism, for profession simply creates no right to baptism,

*Value of Baptisme.* 45

I never read the divil was baptized, and I believe the Dipping Saints will not now baptize him; Yet he really believed, and more then once professed, That Jesus Christ was the Son of God. Profession as an evidence of Covenant-interest, was the Churches guide to baptism, and the Scripture giving another demonstration of Covenant-interest, *viz.* Descent from believing parents; that is also regarded, and the one to be no bar to the other, but both in their place gives due direction who are foederates, and to be baptized.

Nor is the Argument of any more force becaule the Scripture mentioneth vocal profession and baptism upon it, but passeth the other in silence; for  
occa-

occasional and circumstantial actions are no binding precedents, or universal direction to the Church of God. The Church is founded in grown persons, whose Covenant-interest can be known no otherwise but by vocal profession, but it may be edified by infant Branches, who by a course of nature partake of the fatnesse of the Olive, having the birth-right of the Covenant. Thus it was with *Abraham* and his issue, and so with us. 2. Where the general nature of the Covenant, with a long and particular exercise thereof doth dictate, there needs no particular expli cite directions. God in his wisdom designing our right understanding and rational improvement of the Covenant, and our reverend esteem

*Value of Baptisme.* 47

of the old Testament, in its use and necessity to the Christian Church, representing unto us the order of the administration of the Covenant and Circumcision, refers us thither for direction concerning baptism; and we must needs in reason see that the change of a meer Rite or Ceremony under the continuation of the substance and same Covenant will never admit a change of the subjects to be sealed.

Last of all, Infants inability to action is no bar to their baptism, because it voids not their interest in the Covenant: and the Sacrament is such wherein they are to be meerly Passive. When I observe God to have appointed the initiating Seal of initiating grace to be such where men of the greatest activi-

48 *The Verine and*

activity are altogether Passive ; he seemes to me to suggest these shall not act in their admission into the Church , and receiving of my Covenant ; that inability to action may be no bar or hindrance to such as have no lesse interest in the Covenant ; and only Covenant-interest shall make capable of the Seal.

Let not any Antipædobaptist think to amaze us by crying , Why, Sir, on this ground infants may have a right to the Lords Supper , for we say so too ; they have *jus ad rem* , though not *jus in re* , their right is not denied, though present incapacity hinders their injoyment.

These things considered, we must tell the Anabaptist , That  
infants

*Value of Baptisme.* 49

infants right to the Covenant,  
and enjoyment of the initiating  
Seale, having been continued  
throughout the old world un-  
der the Law without the least  
controule, and also under the  
Gospell for more then 1600  
yeares, without any Generall  
interruption or the least di-  
sturbance, untill within this  
200 yeares; we must find bet-  
ter warrant to divest us of it,  
before we part with it; and  
our antiquity (on so clear a  
title) in the enjoyment, me  
thinks should be no meane ar-  
gument to ingenuity; for we  
say in this case as *Jephthah* to  
the King of *Ammon*, Judges  
11. 26. *When Israel dwelt in  
Heshbon and her towns, in Arc-  
er & her towns, and in all the Ci-  
ties of Arnon, three hundred years  
why did ye not then recover  
D them*

50      *The Vertue and*

*them in that space?* so whilst infant right to the Covenant, and initiating Seale dwelt in *Judea* and her towns, in *Asia* and her towns, and in all the Cities of the Church of God, and the borders thereof 2000 yeares, why did you not recover them in that space? surely now you may despair of ever doing it; how much soever you disturb our peace, we will never part with this priviledge.

Conclus. 5. *The signifying of the blood of Christ with its effects, and the sealing of the Covenant of Grace is the end of Baptisme*; Baptisme is both a signe and Seale to excite our thoughts, and affect our mind with the blood of Jesus, & assure our hearts of a right unto the Priviledges of the Covenant, so as to argue them to our soule as grounds



*Value of Baptisme.* 51

grounds of faith on which we are to urge God in Prayer: herein it agreeth with other Sacraments, and in speciall circumcision, into whose place and end it hath succeeded, in that it is *a sign and Seale of the righteousness of faith*, Rom. 4. 11. And so the analogy between water in all its properties, and the blood of Christ doth clearly hold, and the Scripture doth plainly attribute Remission, Sanctification, Regeneration and Salvation to the outward signe or act of Baptisme, as the Graces to be brought to our minds, and made sure to our Soules thereby; (*Mark* 16. 16. *Acts* 2. 38. *Eph.* 5. 26. *Titus* 3. 3. *1 Per.* 3. 21. And it is not only a Seale from God to us as a ground of faith: but also from

us to God as a reason of duty; our subjection to it is an actual confederation with God, that we will be called by his Name, live as his servants in all obedience to his will; so that hereby we are bound to believe in Christ, and forsake, nay fight against sin, this the Apostle dictates when he demands of the *Corinthians*, directing them to joynt advancement of Christ, *into whose name were ye Baptized?* 1 Cor. I. 13. And Peter aggravates the Apostasie of Christians, nay non-proficiency in Grace with this, *They have forgot they were washed from their old sins*, 2 Pet. I. 9. Baptisme will be a monument of perfidy against profane Christians to all Eternity, and aggravate their misery: so that although Baptisme doe not convey

*Value of Baptisme.* 53

weigh Grace *opere operato*, by the meere work, or by any Physicall natural power that is in it selfe, yet it is a morall instrument by contemplation to be rationally improved to the affecting of our hearts with our own uncleanness and the blood of Christ Gods mercy to us, and our duty to him: nor is it *nudum signum* a meer sign to excite our thoughts, but also a Reall Seale, Gods holy Ordinance, Creating to all Baptised a Right to the Covenant, by ratioll acts of faith to be argued, to their own joy and duty, and pleaded to God in Prayer; so that these privileges being not possessed by all Baptized, springs not from any defects in the Ordinance, but neglect in the subjects: if men will not claime by a conferred title and visible Seale, they deservedly

servedly lose their interest.

Here note that I have not wit enough to conceive that the end of the Sacrament makes against infant Baptisme, for infants are capable of Right though not of claime and possession, and Baptisme is given as a ground, not effect of Christian claime; I see noe reason why infants may not be Sealed in the cradle as well as Crowned in the mothers belly; nor is there any force in the consæderation of the Baptized unlesse it must needs be actively and cannot be passively done; I conceive parentall power in dedication to God, and the Sovereign nature of the Covenant imposing on the party Sealed, the condition to be by him performed as well as sealing the comforts to be enjoyed, doth  
fully

fully enforce the confæderation of such as are at the present non-agents ; It will be a hard matter to make me believe that Gods condescension hath lost his authority any more in the Covenant of Grace then in the Covennat of Works, or that infants are not as capable of confæderation by Baptisme, as they were by Circumcision.

I have done with the first thing to shew you what Baptisme is, and now come to the second to shew what is here meant by confident approach :

*Approach to God is the act of a Baptized soule*, and it is done either by *the perception of faith* which is the evidence of things not seen, and substance of things hoped for : *Heb. 11. 1.* This is that personall and private act of the soule whereby

56      *The Vertue and*

it seeth and saluteth God at a distance with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered, and receives an assent unto truth apprehended, which is or cannot be expressed, and hereby we deny not the Baptised, in extraordinary causes where the body cannot be washed by pure water; as in an *Indian* Countrey remote from the Church, or in the Church under a limited order and season of Baptising, as it was in some Churches in primitive times, when they Baptized but twice in a year, may draw nigh to God; no doubt but the Catechumeni, such as learned their Catechisme in order unto Baptisme, had sweet communion with God alone whilst they wanted Communion with the Church, otherwise they had never been

been able to endure Martyrdom.

Or *by the possession of Glory*, when the Soule departing out of the body returnes to God who gave it, and is received into *Abrahams* bosome, or eternall blisse in the presence of God for ever; and this I deny not may be, and doubt not is enjoyed by many unbaptised; I can neither with some *Anabaptists* grant that all that dye in infancy, and before stained with actuall guilt are certainly saved; I see no warrant for it: nor yet with the Papists do I think all that die unbaptized are damned; I believe Baptisme is necessary by reason of Gods command, and as the ordinary Ark or meanes of Salvation, and so the sinfull contempt or neglect of it to be

damnable (though I will not determine God will charge it on the helpelesse infant) yet I see not its necessity to be so absolute that providence superceding the Ordinance by unseasonable death sets the soule under inevitable condemnation; I have confidence to meet many an uncircumcised *Israelite* in Heaven, who died before the eighth day of his age; and if in any, in this case God will have mercy and not Sacrifice.

Or by *the presentation of duty*: and performance of publick devoire in the Tabernacle of the Lord, going up with his Scribes, worshiping in his Sanctuary, and in the Assemblies of his People in all the parts of Gods Worship; this is an appearing before God in *Zion*,  
and



and a drawing nigh unto him in his Holy place, not to be admitted to the uncircumcised among the Jews, nor unbaptized among Christians; this unto me seems to be the *drawing nigh* intended in the Text, and is that I intend in the Doctrine (*viz*) That the Leviticall Rites being abolished, and the way of access to God is now by Gospell Ordinances: they that will use them must begin at Baptisme, and first have their bodies washed with pure Water, and be thereby made members of the body or Church of Christ, and be consecrated unto God; without which such as have the charge of Gods Holy things must keep them from intermedling with them.

*Confidence* is the adjunct quality of this act of approach  
to

to God, and stands opposite  
un o the *tremblings and despon-*  
*dency of the uncircumcised Gen-*  
*tiles* who could expect no other  
but rejection and displeasure in  
their approach to God; for that  
they were aliens and strangers  
to the Common-wealth of Is-  
rael, without God and with-  
out hope in the world, *Eph. 2.*  
*11, 12.* Positively forbidden  
approach to God and the use  
of his Holy thing, *Ezek. 44.*  
*9.* And so the terrors of the cir-  
cumcised *Jewes*, who though  
admitted into Gods presence,  
were yet kept at a distance, and  
might not enter the *Holy of Ho-*  
*lies* in their own Persons: but  
by their High Priest, but now  
such was the priviledges of Be-  
lievers, and the advantage of  
Baptisme, that the Baptized  
might not onely enter the san-  
ctuary;

## *Value of Baptisme. 61*

Quary whence the uncircumcised were excluded, but also the *Holy of Holies*, not made with hands, but eternall in the Heavens: so that they who by Baptism have *their body washed* in the outward sign, and *their hearts sprinkled from an evill Conscience*, the inward Grace of this Ordinance, are required to shake off all feares and doubts, and to encourage themselves to the enjoyment of all Ordinances, and discharges of all duties whereby they may walke with God and hold communion with him: for that they are the persons so qualified as that the Church must not onely admit them to outward acts of Worship, but also a liberty of inward adoration (by the nearest approach they can possibly make to God) is their  
pri.

62      *The Vertue and*

priviledge to them is given full assurance of ready acceptance, for the way is open to, the Holiest, the Vale is rent, the High Priest gone before, and the liberty left Common to all such (though none but such) as having their hearts sprinkled from an evill conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water do draw nigh to the same; both these are necessary qualifications: for, an approach to God without an heart sprinkled must needs be diffident, and full of doubts, and without a body washed, dreadfull and full of horror.

The Text and doctrine you have had explained, and you see the point of doctrine plainly asserting, That Baptisme or the body washed with pure water is the especial qualification that must

*Value of Baptisme.* 60

must fit us for an approach to God.

The next thing to be done is to prove the doctrine, and it is in it selfe a truth so plaine that none that understand any thing of the method of Gospell worship, and the necessitie of outward acts and bodie qualifications in approaches to an holy God, but do subscribe unto the truth of it; indeed the late spiritual Chymists who have by our late overlarge liberty of conscience, (I mean sinful toleration,) had the boldness to blaspheme all Gods holy Ordinances, and under a pretence of spirituality, to nullifie all outward acts of worship and qualifications to duty, have denied it: and the late Intruder into this place, hath openly derided the necessity of this qualification.

## 64      *The Vertue and*

lification in access to God, offering the liberty of Church Communion and the priviledges of the Covenant to such as never passed under water Baptisme, as if the order of the Gospell were now inverted; and Gods Ordinances not capable of profanation, or the answer of a good conscience, reall grace, were obvious to every eye that hath the charge of holy things, and is a Steward of the Mysteries of Salvation; I shall therefore briefly enforce this plain and Generally acknowledged truth with these commonly known observations as, the reasons thereof.

Reas. 1. *Baptisme prepared the way of the Messiah, or Christ his appearance in and approach to the Church: the qualification that fits the Church for Christ*  
his.

his approach to her, fits the Church for approach to Christ or God; for these are reciprocal, the one goes not without a return of the other, and the same qualification must be in both; for that holy Majesty is present, Holinesse is in the Assembly of the Saints, when God comes to his people as well as in Heaven where his People come to him: and all that will walk in this consuming fire and meet this Messiah, and be made fit to enjoy him, must not onely have the heart sprinkled but also the body washed with pure water; *Baptisme* is the Sanctification of the People, directed to prepare them for Gods appearence in Mount Si-on: the voice of the Grand Herald crying in the wilderness *prepare ye the way of the Lord, make*

*make his paths strait, Mat. 3. Repent and be Baptised: The* Mace of Majesty borne by the Messenger of the Messiah to strike awe in, and require subjection from the expectants of his coming, was, *the Baptisme of amendment of life: The* levelling Engine that pulled down and made plain all mountainy and proud hearts that withstood the coming of Christ in his first appearance, was *Baptisme*, insomuch that the Scribes and Pharisees who rejected the counsell of God against themselves not *being Baptized*, are all along branded as enemies, who would not have Christ reign over them: in a word, the promised and prophesied *Elias*, who was to come before the Lord to prepare his way, is from his preparative work (which



*Value of Baptisme.* 76

(which is plainly declared to have been Preaching and Baptizing) denominated *John the Baptist*, and the way of the Lord thus prepared is proclaimed as a ground of Confidence to the Church; *Isa. 40. 3. 9. 11.* So that if the way of the Messiah his appearance must be the way of the Churches approach to him: as it is evident it must in that Baptisme, did not onely precede, but also followes his appearance, for *John the Baptist* did not onely prepare for his coming, but ever since his ascension his Ministers do go teach and Baptize into the name of Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost; Baptisme hath ever been the Discipling forme, method of matriculation in his Schoole, and incorporation into his body, and solemne consecration,

secration unto communion with him of all such as were asfarre off, but are now made nigh, even the people of the living God; their Baptisme is the qualification that fits for a confident approach to God, without which we cannot be assured of acceptance.

Real. 2. *Baptisme prepared* *Jesus Christ unto the work of* *Mediatorship*: The way of access to God is the same for the people as Priest; for the Head as Members; for the Church as for Christ: the Mediatour as Man must manifest himselfe Holy in all things; not onely in an immunity from all positive acts of sin, but also a positive performance of all duty, he becomes in all things obedient unto the Father; lives in Communion with the Church, and

*Value of Baptisme.* 69

and is conforme to all holy Ordinances; proclaiming himselfe a Member of the Church before he propose himselfe a Mediator for or to the Church; *he is Baptized* because it thus became him to fulfill all Righteousness, by his subjection to Ordinances, and thereby suiting himselfe for his worke: he doth not only shew but sanctifie them to be the way of access to the Father; for he as our High Priest hath left open the same way of approach, and as the Captain hath marched in the same steps of salvation in which we are to follow him, and we shall find *him Baptized*, and so immediately entring on the exercise of his Mediatorship: when (and not till then) he was Baptized, he is *solemnly inaugurated into his office*, coming  
out

out of the water the Spirit came visibly on him, and the voice was heard, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him.* We never read of his praying preaching and combat with the Divil till he was Baptized, and no sooner was he Baptized, but, as consecrated to God, he Prayed, *Luk. 3. 21.* as confirmed to the Combate, he was led immediately into the wilderness to be tempted. *Mar. 1 12.* And as one now completely fitted to transact the business of mans salvation, he preached the Kingdom of God, *Mat. 4.* By all which the Mediator doth plainly dictate, That acts of holiness must move in order, beginning at Baptism: and that Baptism doth fit men to prayer, for temptation and all publick acts of Religion; and if any will

*Value of Baptisme.* 71

will in confidence of acceptance follow the Mediator, they must have their body first washed with pure water, and be by Baptisme thereunto prepared.

Reas. 3. *Circumcision was the qualification of confident approach to God under the old Covenant:* And therefore Baptism having succeeded into the place, standing in the stead, & serving to the end for which Circumcision served, must be so under the new Covenant. The administration of the Covenant may be altered, but the Covenant it self abides substantially, the same to the Church of God both in the Old and New Testament. Sacraments are permanent and inseparable adjuncts to the Covenant as grounds of Faith: and however the different administration may cause a change  
in

94    *The Veriue and*

in the Rite and outward Ceremony, in the matter applyed, or form of application, yet is there no change in their use and signification: but what was of old signified by the Seals of the Covenant, the same is now signified by such as have succeeded into their place; thus the Lords Supper supplyeth the room of the Passeover, and Baptism the room of Circumcision; so that whatever Circumcision did confer on its subjects, the same priviledges are by Baptism conferred on its subjects. And Circumcision was to the Jews the *door of admission* into the Church, the *Ceremony of Consecration* to such as approach to the Lord: and the *Character of distinction* on the people of the living God, and so the qualification that was  
unto

*Value of Baptisme.* 73

unto them the ground of confidence in approach to God ; hence *Circumcision* and *Uncircumcision* are the distinguishing terms between the Jewes (the only people related unto God) and the Gentiles ( that were afar off , without God , and without hope in the world, *Rom.* 2.26. *Eph.* 2.11, 12.) and the approach of the uncircumcised unto the Sanctuary of God, is declared to be a polluting and profaning of Gods Sanctuary, *Ezek.* 44 7, 9. therefore such are forbidden the least approach to God ; they may not enter the Sanctuary nor observe the Lords Passover, *Exod.* 12.48. Nay, the uncircumcised must be cut off from the Lord people , *Gen.* 17.14. And if a stranger will come nigh to God and have a place in his Sanctuary.

E he

## 74      *The Vertue and*

he must first lay hold on the Covenant of God and be Circumcised; so that by Circumcision Jews were acknowledged and Gentiles profelyted members of the Church, entituled to the Covenant, and entrusted with the liberty of accessse to God in his Sanctuary.

That Baptism is the Ordinance under the New Testament answering unto Circumcision in the Old, can any that observe the *order of Gospel*, the *cessation of Circumcision*, the *regular succession of Baptism* into its place, believe some *initial Seal essential to Gospel administration*, and see none established if Baptisme be excluded? and find *Baptism* in all things fully *significant of what was signified by Circumcision*, deny that Baptism is succeeded into the

the



*Value of Baptisme.* 75

the room, serves to the end that Circumcision did; and so confers the same priviledge of confidence, and is Essentially necessary to such as approach to God in acts of worship. Unto such I would in short say, Did Circumcision incorporate into the Church? are we not all Baptized into one Body, *1 Cor. 12.13*? did Circumcision put the name of God on any? do not as many as are Baptized put on Jesus Christ, *Gal. 3.27*? Was Circumcision a sign of Regeneration, called the Circumcision of the heart? Are not the Baptized buried with Christ in baptism? Doth not the Apostle in this very respect note the agreement of these two distinct, but not different Seals, *Col. 2.11,12*? Did not Circumcision seal the

76 *The Vertue and*

Covenant of Grace, *I will be your God?* is it not therefore called the Seal of the righteousness by Faith, *Rom 4 11*? Is not the propriety to the promise of Grace, Remission and Salvation the very ground entitling and encouraging to Baptisme as the Seal thereof, *Act. 2. 38, 39*? And is not this agreement sufficient to demonstrate, that Baptism is now what Circumcision was of old to the Church? What if in some things these two Seals do differ, is the difference so essential as to deny the succession of the one to the other? It is true, the one was by blood, the other by water; the one is to male and femal, both sexes, the other to males only; the one limited to the eighth day, the other left at liberty: but do these or the like

like hinder either the one or other from being ordinances of Incorporation to the Church, Consecration to God, or Confirmation to our confidence in drawing nigh to God? Will not the differences be found as many and great between the Passeeover and the Lords Supper, yet the succession of the one to the other will not be denied? Circumstantial differences do shew they are not the same in substance and matter, but they must be essential disagreements that shall deny a succession unto the same use and end. And if Baptism be not the Ordinance that supplyeth the room of Circumcision, what doth? How is it called? when and where was it instituted? and who were ever consecrated by it so as to have the boldness

78      *The Vertue and*

of accessse to God? Or is the Church defective under the New Testament as to an initiating Seal, so that the holy things of God lie common, no visible badge of holinesse is now to describe them that may with freedome use them.

Most rude and ridiculous is that objected bar to this succession that some Antipædobaptists have urged and talked of among you, *viz. Circumcision was a National priviledg, and only sealed the promise of Canaan to the children of Israel.* If so, how then came it to be used before Israel was a Nation? and how came it to be used after the land was possessed and the promise accomplished? Why doth *Moses* mention the Covenant of Grace, *I will be your God*, as the ground and reason

*Value of Baptisme.* 79

reason of Circumcision? To what doth the Circumcision of heart so frequently mentioned in Scripture allude? it is often joyned with the Circumcision of flesh; What was the benefit of Circumcision to the proselyted Gentiles? We never read that by the virtue of it they demanded, or the Jews divided to them any portion of the Land of *Canaan*. And it will be an hard matter to make me believe it did to them Seal a Blank, for that I find it in Scripture called, *A laying hold on the Covenant of God*; and the Uncircumcision are declared strangers to the Covenant, and without God, and without hope in the world. Why doth the Apostle define Circumcision to be the Seal of the righteousness of Faith? I find

this phrase to denominate the Covenant of Grace and its Spiritual priviledges ; but that it ever denominated *Canaan*, or any National priviledges, I am yet to be informed. And the limitation of it unto the personal faith of *Abraham* is so inconsistent to the scope of the Text, absurde in it self, and smells so much of Popish *Bellarmino*, that I cannot but avoid ( I had almost said abhor ) it. But lastly, I would Quarry whether the adversaries of Circumcision sealing the Covenant of Grace, did ever yet observe *adjuncts separable from a Covenant to bear the name of a Covenant?* or did ever yet discern that the Land of *Canaan* was an *appendant* on the Covenant, but not of the *essence* of the Covenant, which  
if

*Value of Baptisme.* 81

if they well study, I doubt not but they will correct their ignorance and the errors thence arising, and so with us conclude, That Circumcision sealed Spiritual priviledges to the Jews as Baptism doth to Christians; and Baptism succeeding to its use and ends, must have the same subjects, and is now the special ground of confident approach to God.

Reas. 4. *The nature and order of Baptism doth dispose unto a confident approach to God:* Baptism is a Seal and the first Seal to the Covenant of Grace and Salvation, and so is a ground of Faith, and an encouragement in accessse to God. But in the *Nature of Baptism* three things do dispose unto confidence in approach to the Lord:

1. It is an Ordinance of  
Conjunction to the Church.

2. Consecration to God.

3. Confoederation with God.

And every one of these are  
Reasons of boldnesse in Access  
and assurance of Acceptance.

1. Baptism is an Ordinance of  
conjunction to the Church.  
The Church is Christs Body,  
and every individual Christian  
is the members thereof, unit-  
ed by Baptism as by Nerves  
and Sinews: None but the  
Church may come nigh unto  
God, in *Zion* every one must  
appear before God: Christ is  
only conversant with his Spouse,  
if the Gentiles will draw nigh  
to the God of *Jacob*, they must  
joyn themselves to Israel the  
people of the Lord: and all  
believers that will come nigh  
to God, must be added to the  
*Church*; all the promises of  
God.



*Value of Baptisme.* 83

God are made to the Church; and all the administrations of the Covenant are in and to the Church; *Ex Ecclesia nulla Salus*, out of the Church no Salvation. They that will come nigh to God as his children, must be the daughters of Sion, of the household of Faith, and Commonwealth of Israel. To be cast out of the Church, is to be debarred all priviledges of grace, & delivered over to Satan: for that relation to the Church is the only reason of every individual believers claim of promises and priviledges, & ground of confidence in all worship unto God; and this relation is conferred by Baptism, 1 Cor. 12.13. *We are all Baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, bond or free.* Baptism is the only badg of distinction to the Lords people; the:

the very door of admission into the household of Faith; the very method of matriculation to Christ; his Disciples; and manner of adding to the Church such as shall be saved, *Act. 2.*

41. In a word, Baptism is the band of union to all Gods servants, binding them to a constant adherencie to his Name, and joynt attendance on his Worship, and is the bar of division from all others that are yet strangers to the Covenant; so as that until baptized they may not communicate of the holy things of God with the Church, nor come nigh with them to the Lord. In the Primitive times of the Church the Catechumenists, who were preparing for Baptism, not having been yet Baptized, were sent from Church Communion and  
holy

*Value of Baptisme.* 85

holy priviledges with the profane and pænitentiaries by the cry of *Sacra Sacris*, *holy things for holy men*: but when by Baptisme they were incorporated into the Church then they continued in *prayer, breaking of bread and every act of Worship to God with confidence*: so that till the Church appear *our mother* we see no warrant to *call God Father*, his children are no vagrants in the high way and hedges, and when begotten by uncorruptible seed of the Word were by Baptisme, placed in the lap, and laid to the breasts of the Church, then as her children we claim all the Priviledges of the Covenant and come to the throne of Grace with confidence; nor may any without a forfeiture of Baptisme be judicially exacted by the Church.

Church deny our relation and liberty of access to God; I never yet could conceive any warrantable reason to deny the liberty of access to the Lords table to such Baptized soules whose horrid profaneness and obstinate spirits did not make them obnoxious to the censures of the Church in order to their excommunications and dismembring from the body, and certainly Circumcision did not more firmly incorporate unto the Church under the Law, and conferre a liberty of approach unto the Sanctuary, then Baptisme doth under the Gospel.

2. *Baptisme is an Ordinance of Consecration unto God*, God is a God of Holiness and will be sanctified in such as come unto him: none may appear before.

*Value of Baptisme.* 87

before him in their prophane-  
ness; the Masse of Mankind  
is so prophaned with sin that  
men in common may not ap-  
pear before God, such as shall  
adore him must be adored for  
him, and if they will hold com-  
munion with him they must be  
consecrated to him; God  
never comes nigh to Israel but  
he first calls to have *the people*  
*Sanctified*, nor comes the  
*Messiah* before his Messenger  
had *prepared his way*; Israel  
the onely Nation that holds  
communion with and comes  
to God are called *an holy Na-*  
*tion* because consecrated by  
Circumcision; hence Circumci-  
sion is the terme and title of  
a *Sanctified people*, but uncir-  
cumcision the title and terme  
that denominates the *propha-*  
*nations* that might not come  
nigh.

nigh to God: It is Gods command that such as were not first sanctified by Circumcision must not touch the Pasleover, and it is given in charge to the keepers of the Sanctuary that the uncircumcised enter not into it to pollute it; unhallowed things much lesse unhallowed persons, might not come nigh to God under the Law; the holinesse of God is the same under the Gospell, and therefore such as will come nigh unto him must be *consecrated*, for he will have acceptable Sacrifice to be offered by *a chosen Generation, a Royall Priesthood, an holy Nation*; 1 Pet. 2. 5. 9. Men must be brought out of the high wayes and hedges and in his house be cloathed with a wedding garment, that with any confidence willexpect a welcome to his  
wel;

*Value of Baptisme.* 89

wedding Super, *Mat. 22.* And the only Ordinance of Consecration to God is Baptisme: This is the badg of distinction and bar of division between the holy and prophane; if the Lord Jesus will present his Church to God he *Sanctifieth it by the washing of water through the Word.* Ephes. 5. 26. And if ever we will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven we must be born of the *Water and spirit*: by Baptisme we are purified from the corruptions that are in the world through lust, and solemnly dedicated unto the name of Father Son and Holy Ghost, hereby we are separated from the world and added to the Church; and the Baptized continue together in the Apostles doctrine in prayer and breaking of bread, and all acts of worship, so that  
being

60 90. *The Vertue and*

being thus consecrated, called out of the masse of mankind and constituted a peculiar and holy people to the Lord: Let us draw nigh in full assurance having our bodies washed with pure water.

3. *Baptisme is an Ordinance of Confederation with God*; two cannot walke together except they be agreed; God is a consuming fire to man if he condescend not a Covenant, as a shreene to prevent its scorching heat; *I will be your God and ye shall be my people* is the onely argument of encouragement to *Abraham* to walk with God and assurance of Believers acceptance with God; guilty man cannot come nigh offended God without some assurance that wrath is appeased and God Reconciled: none since *Adams* fall.



fall can come nigh to God as a Creator, and Redemption must be transmitted by a Covenant, and the Administrations of the Covenant must be the onely pledge of assurance and encouragement unto access to God; the Covenant of God with *Levi* is the onely liberty of the Priests entrance in the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Covenant of Mediatorship is the confidence of Jesus Christ, his intercession, and the Covenant of Circumcision the Israelites title to the Passeeover and freedom of the Sanctuary, and the Covenant of Baptisme Christians Right to the Lords Table and freedom of drawing nigh to God; the Baptized do confederate with God, you have heard, before that they must be *federati*, in Covenant that are subjects

subjects of Baptisme, *the promise is to you*, is the ground and reason why any is Baptized; Baptisme is the mutuall act of sealing the Covenant between God and the soule, by this outward sign and pledge God assureth us *he will be our God*; pardon our sin, subdue our Corruption by the blood of Christ, and we answerable stipulate with God, that we *will accept him to be our God in Christ*, we will be called by his name and become his servants; so that Baptisme is an argument pleadable in prayer for the remission of sin and Sanctification, and an engagement unto duty against all impiety to be urged under all temptation; as it is a Sacrament it is a reciprocall bond between God and the soule: when *Paul* would

*Value of Baptisme. 93*

would check the *Corinthians* schisme he doth it by this query, *were ye Baptized into the name of Paul?* importing you are to call your selves by his name with whom you confederated in Baptisme: so that the Baptized being Gods federates, the Covenant being in their flesh, they must needs be qualified with confidence to come nigh to God, having such a ground of faith whereupon to claime the promises as is the Seales of the Covenant, the most encouraging argument that ever Gods people urged in access to God is, *Lord remember thy Covenant; we are thy people.*

We see then, that if we will be guided in our drawing nigh, God by the way of Christ, his appearance to his Church,  
or

94 *The Verine and*

or approach to his Father as a Mediator, or if we observe the succession of Baptisme to Circumcision, or nature of Baptisme as an Ordinance of confederation with God, consecration to God, conjunction to the Church of God, we must needs be convinced that Baptisme or the body washed with pure water is an especiall qualification that fits us for accessse to God. And now we proceed to the application of the Doctrine.

*The first use* then that we should make of this point is of *information*, and that teacheth us this Lesson, *Baptisme is an Ordinance of exceeding dignity and absolute necessity* to be pursued and highly prized by the people of God that will draw nigh unto him: for it is the

*Value of Baptisme.* 95

the especial qualification that fits us with confidence to draw nigh unto him, as it is an Ordinance of God, it is the object of reverence and esteem and indispensably necessary by reason of *Divine command*, so to be sleighted by such as proteste subjection to him: but of much more value when considered as the Ordinance of incorporation into Christs body, matriculation into the household of faith, and consecration unto an holy God, and so it doth not onely call for affection, esteem honour and reverence: but also it presents it selfe unto our reason, and imposeth it selfe on our conscience as usefull and indispensably necessary, whilst it appeares not onely as an *act of worship*, but *Organ of Grace* and instrument of much good unto the

the

the soule, the which though it doth not conferre, *opere operato* by meer application as by any Physicall power in it selfe, yet it is a morall instrument offering matter to the ratiōnall argumentations and discourses of a believing soule, either to the encouragement of his faith or enforcement of duty, and is by divine institution Gods method and instrument whereby he hath graciously confirmed these priviledges, and so it is necessary not onely *ratione precepti*, a commanded duty: but also *mediis* as a morall meanes to be managed by meditation and *Divine method* prescribed by the Lord, as that whereby we may claime his promise and conclude a relation to and fitnessse for Communion with him, and without which

*Value of Baptisme. 97*

which we cannot ordinarily expect his blessing, and be accounted his people; and what he doth in extraordinary cases where he providentially supersedeth an Ordinance, as by untimely death, and the like, doth no way abate the dignity or abstract from the necessity of washing the body with pure water by the Sacrament of Baptisme; the conviction of this truth will call for a constant and reverent attendance on Baptisme and conscientious use of it in all convenient opportunities that God shall give us, and check the contempt and profane neglect thereof that is not a little abounded (to our shame and with grief of heart be it spoken) in the midst of us: were men but rightly affected with the nature of Baptisme, they would

F

see

see in it beauty, and of it a great necessity. Was not washing of the flesh necessary and the holy Garment glorious in Israel because they fitted for approach to God and entrance into the holy place? if men were but really convinced that the body washed with pure water was a ground of assurance, because a qualification of access to God, that Baptisme is the onely band of union and doore of admission into the Church, the formall consecration to the service of the living God, what an esteem of Baptisme must needs possesse their hearts, and make them not content without, but carefull to pursue it, as seeing into Gods presence there is no approach to such as are not sanctified by the washing of water through the Word? but a pressing unto  
Gods



*Value of Baptisme.* 99

Gods Ordinances, not thus prepared, must be a presumption no less then damnable; nay how would the sence of Baptisme affect the heart with joy, whilst thereby we are made Members of Gods Church (an higher priviledg then the Coronation of a King C.) and made fit for the worship of an holy God, the ground of all alacrity and boldnesse in the use of his Ordinances? How must such a soule say what a happy condition am I now in, who through Grace have my body washed with pure water, and joyned to the household of faith, and sanctified for the service of that consuming fire and Holy God, whom to approach unto, it's the greatest happinesse man can enjoy? whilst others are a far off, debarred the Holy things

## 100 *The Virtue and*

of Grace, and dare not intermeddle with the Holy things of God, nor draw nigh unto his Holy place; I come with freedom into his Sanctuary, and claim the liberty and priviledges thereof by virtue of Baptism, that Covenant of God which is upon my flesh, in this therefore I will rejoyce before the Lord. Nay, the sense of Baptisme as a qualification for access to God would set our hearts into a reverent use and dreadfull attendance on the administration of it to others; whilst the Element is weak and simple, its use and end must make it glorious and powerful; whilst common washing is contemptible, a bathing the flesh at the door of the Tabernacle in order to an entrance into the Holy place,  
and

and appearance before God is dreadful; though Wax and parchment are poor, and vile, & base, and common Commodities most Shops afford Commodities much higher prized, yet these conjoynd by the hand of Majesty to make a Patent, Deed or *Magna Charta* to secure some Grant, priviledge or great revenue, is of much more worth and value, and received with more reverence and esteem: if we look on water, we see it is an Element as low as common; as mean in our esteem, as ordinary in mens use; and this is ready to raise in our hearts contemptible thoughts, and make us say, what a beggerly Element and base Administration is this? What profit can be in the Application of an handfull of water? But when we shall con-

sider that water is applyed by vertue of Gods Command, as a most sacred Ordinance, to signify the blood of Christ whereby we are cleansed from all sin; to seale unto us the Covenant of Grace and all its priviledges of Salvation, to set us in union with the Church to the enjoyment of all Gospel Ordinances, and Sanctifie us as a peculiar people, that may and must draw nigh to God in assurance of faith; what lustre doth there appear in the Ordinance? what reverence doth then raise our Spirits? what high and honourable regard doe we then see we ow unto this common and contemptible act of Baptisme? oh what prayers for efficacy? what prayes for enjoyment, what pleasure in administration? must the consecrating

*Value of Baptisme.* 103

secrating, qualifying and soule-  
encouraging assuring nature of  
Baptisme, effect in all such as  
are seriously affected with Gods  
Holiness and the order of ap-  
proach to him? unto all such  
Baptisme is no carnall beggar-  
ly and unprofitable Element,  
but a Glorious Spirituall Evan-  
gelicall Administration of ex-  
ceeding dignity; no Church  
complement and matter of in-  
differency that may or may not  
be used without any damage,  
but a compleat duty by reason  
of Divine command and its  
own due nature, disposing man  
into such a devout relation to  
God, and so of indispensable  
necessity.

*Use 2.* Is of reproofe, just-  
ly to blame that disesteeme and  
disregard of Baptisme that is  
to be found among us; our age  
F 4 of

of liberty hath set us so loose to Gospell Ordinances that many can be not onely content without them, but also readily run into the contempt of them; how few in the midst of us understand the nature and seek the use of Baptisme as a ground of faith and Ordinance of Consecration, and so of confident access to God; mens principles and practise doth proclaim their palpable ignorance of such priviledges possessed by *the body washed with pure water*: How many (to our shame and with grieve be it spoken) do use Baptisme as a *meere Church complement and convenient Ceremony*? to the content of their wives, kinsfolke, friends or neighbours, bring their children to be Baptised without any awe of an Ordinance

*Value of Baptisme.* 105

nance of God upon their spirit  
or apprehension of advantage  
to be by Baptisme conferred,  
or design and intention of so-  
lemne dedication of their chil-  
dren to God and his service,  
and so to have Gods name and  
Covenant stamped upon their  
flesh, and them fitted for ac-  
cesse to God in the Assemblies  
of his people; and hence it is  
that they are at cost and care  
for the civilities that attend the  
Baptisme of their children,  
but as for the Solemne praises  
of God, for the blessing of the  
Covenant, prayers for a blef-  
sing on an Ordinance, and care-  
full instruction of their Bapti-  
zed children in the consecrating  
nature of Baptisme, the bold-  
nesse it creates, and the duty of  
access to God it imposeth, these  
come not into his thoughts, cost

him no care or pains, his friends gone, and work done, he thinks himselfe well rid of a piece of trouble, and pursues that dayes enjoyments to no more advantage : nay how many sit so luke-warme in minds and affections to Baptisme that they think it to be a meer Ceremony, and matter of indifferency, *if their body be washed* they are content, but they know no good it hath done them : and *if it be not washed* they are as well pleased, they see no losse they undergoe by the want of it, and they can accompany with the Baptized or unbaptized in the Assemblies of Gods people and Adminiltrations of Grace ; they matter not an outward Ceremony, but look after the inward and hidden Man of the heart ; true and reall Grace  
without



*Value of Baptisme.* 107

without any outward Ordinance, shall be the ground of their communion; but say Circumcision or Uncircumcision avails not to them; must it not be concluded that these men yet need to be informed in the first rudiments of the Doctrine of God, even the Doctrine of Baptismes? and to be convinced, that the body washed with pure water, is the qualification prescribed by a glorious God, to consecrate such as with confidence approach before him? and so the contempt of it must needs be prophane and dangerous; nay, too many in the midst of us, open their black mouths and give their blasphemous tongues the liberty of decrying and vilifying this Holy Ordinance, envying against it as a carnal, base, beggarly Element,  
an

an Excrementitious Ordinance, and Antichristian Idol, and piece of abomination; so horribly profane and impudent do impostors grow by liberty, that they will outface God, and speak blasphemously of Divine institution, and the appointed order of access to God in the assemblies of his people. Nay, what shall we say to the rude recession of people from the application of Baptism to others? or their irreverent attendance on it, as if it concerned not them, or were no part of Gods worship; and of those eminent pretenders unto Saintship, who disown the relation of men Baptized to God, and themselves (as the people of God) standing at a distance from the consecrated to the Lords service, as if profane and all.

altogether strangers to the Covenant, and many other profane carriages that are insuitable to so holy an Ordinance: But *Generalia non pungunt*; not to confine my self to Generals, which will hardly reach the heart and consciences. Give me leave to take notice of those principles and practises that are inconsistent with this holy use and nature of Baptisme, and do indeed profanely militate against this doctrine that teacheth you, That Baptism, or the body washed with pure water, is the especial qualification of confidence in approach to God in the assemblies of his people: and I shall Rank them into this order, and make them known by these names:

They are such who,

I. Di-

1. Dictate to the unbaptized a liberty of access to God.

2. Disown and decline their Baptism in their approaches to God.

3. Disregard Baptism administered to others.

4. Disesteeme the priviledges conferred by Baptism.

5. Declare not to theirs Baptized the dignity and duty of Baptism.

6. Deny the Baptized the liberty of access to God in the assemblies of his people and use of his Ordinances.

Unto each of these this Doctrine doth speak Reproof and Blame, as we shall note in the particular Consideration of them. And

*First*, If the washing of the body with pure water or Baptism

## *Value of Baptisme.* III

tism be the especial qualification of confident approach to God in the assemblies of his people, then Generally are they too blame, who do *Dictate to the unbaptized a liberty of access to God.* Many in this Remissive age of ours, can make Baptism a matter of no moment in their Communion; they can hold Communion with baptized or unbaptized, and cry out, Circumcision or uncircumcision is to them nothing, as if this Ordinance of Baptism were rendered indifferent as the nullified Ordinance of Circumcision. And they themselves complain of rigor and severity in such as impose Baptism as the ground of Communion in the Church, and decline the administration of holy things to the unbaptized; these call for inward  
grace,

## 112 *The Vertue and*

grace, the answer of a good  
 conscience. Real love to Je-  
 sus Christ, and then they care  
 not whether they ever passe  
 under the outward Ordinance  
 or be Baptized. And herein  
 the Lukewarmnesse of private  
 men is not so much to be bla-  
 med, for that the leaders of  
 the people cause them to erre;  
 some that stand in the midst of  
 you as guides, and professe  
 themselves Ministers of Jesus  
 Christ, and teachers of the  
 truth, have not been affraid  
 (if I may not say ashamed)  
 positively to affirm, and (in this  
 Pulpit) plainly to teach as the  
 very mind of God, *That Bap-*  
*tism is not the ground of Church*  
*Communion, but real Grace, the*  
*answer of a good Conscience, by*  
*the Resurrection of Christ from*  
*the dead:* and therefore did  
 offer

*Value of Baptisme. 113*

offer and affirm, That although a man were altogether ignorant of the Doctrine of Baptism, and had never passed under that outward Ordinance, yet he could own him as a member of the Church, hold Communion with him, and admit him to all the Ordinances of Jesus Christ; and much to this purpose, which stands in a direct contradiction to this truth, and declared use of Baptism. For if it be the qualification of access to God, the door of admission into the assemblies of Gods people, and way of consecration unto Communion in the holy things of God: must it not needs be profaneness to administer the holy things of God to such as are not thus qualified? and presumption to invite such unto the participation

tion of them? But a little to  
expostulate with the asserters of  
this Baptism-subverting notion:  
Will God be worshipped  
by outward Ordinances?  
and must these Ordinan-  
ces be enjoyed in order, some  
preparing for participation to  
others? Is Baptism the first  
Ordinance of the Gospel? Ini-  
tiating Seal of the Covenant?  
Door of admission into the  
Church? and method of Ma-  
triculation into the household  
of Faith? and way of conse-  
cration unto Communion with  
God and his people? Is it not  
reckoned among the first prin-  
ciples of the Word of God, to  
be learned by all Disciples en-  
tered into Christ's School? And  
if so, must it not be horrid  
profaneness to decry the know-  
ledge of Baptism and its Do-  
ctrine



ctrine? To expose communion with God and his people to common hands never sanctified, and by body washing separated from the heap of mankind, on whom Baptism never stamped holinesse? and grosse impiety to fling open the door of Gods house that dogs and swine may enter at pleasure, there being no baptismal badge of distinction between them and the children of God? Is it not great prodigality to offer the priviledges of the Covenant to every hand, not having any Sealed interest whereon to claim? Is it not grievous presumption to decline the directed order of the Gospel, and dispence the holy things of God in a way and method contrary to that whereby Christ and his Apostles either injoyed or  
ad-

administred them? Must not this needs be Superstition, Will-worship, a laying waste Divine directions, and running from the Rule of Scripture, and due method of holy things? Must not God in his Jealousie needs arise and say to such Ministers as to the keepers of the Sanctuary, *Ezek. 44. 7. You have enough of all abominations, seeing ye have brought into my house the unbaptized in flesh and in spirit.* To what end do these men Baptize any, or urge any to be Baptized? In this assertion Baptisme is proclaimed a matter of indifferency, nay, a meer nullity, an action of no advantage, administred to no end: for if it confer not outward Priviledges, it will never convey inward Grace. And thus the institutions of the Lord  
Jesus

*Value of Baptisme. 117*

Jesus stands charged with folly and vanity, and the Ordinances of the Gospel are made Complements, and bootlesse Ceremonies; but rather the Spirit of seduction is evidenced to be prophane, notoriously wicked, willingly withstanding Divine order, and in the name of God exposing the holy God to irreverent, rude approaches, and his Seals and sanctifying Ordinance to scorn and contempt.

Nor is this guilt thus charged in the least extenuated by the qualification required and propounded as the ground of Communion; viz. *Real Grace, the answer of a good conscience by the Resurrection of Christ from the dead*: for I never yet found this propounded in Scripture as the ground of Church communion; nor is it

## 118 *The Veriue and*

it discernable by every eye of every common believer, who are to see such sanctified unto God to whom they do joyn themselves. Nay, the very Stewards of the mysteries of God have not that Spirit of infallible discerning the truth of grace. Grosse hypocrites have been by the very Apostles of Jesus Christ Baptized and admitted into the Church: and so will be by all that administer holy things, for Hypocrites void of true Grace, must be found in the Church when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to Judgment. And if it could be known, yet by what authority is inward Grace divided from the outward Ordinance and opposed thereunto? Those things which God hath joyned together, shall any man dare

dare to divide asunder? and can true Grace consist with ignorance of the Doctrine of Baptism, and neglect and contempt of the least Ordinance of Jesus Christ, and inversion of the order of the Gospel? But is not this most gracelesse Chymistry so to spiritualize Gospel dispensation as to Deifie every Minister that hath the charge of the Sanctuary? Nay, every believer that must hold communion in the Ordinances of the Gospel, by making them *Searchers of the heart*, and infallible discerners of Real Grace, the ground of Church Communion, and to justify the washing of the body which God hath made the ground of confidence in access to him in the assemblies of his people.

*Secondly,* The second sort to be reprov'd as contradictorie to this consecrating, faith encouraging Ordinance of washing the body with pure water, are such as *Disown and decline Baptism in their drawing nigh to God in the assemblies of his people*: Like Priest like People; if men that call themselves Ministers and Teachers shall with black mouths blaspheme Baptisme, it cannot but meet with people that shall profane, contemn, and cast off that holy Ordinance. If Teachers shall dare in the Name of the Lord to declare, *That water-baptism is not the ground of communion with the Church visible*, no marvel if men do slight Baptisme in seeking such communion; nay, it were a marvel if some should not sinfully reject  
and

*Value of Baptisme.* 121

and renounce it ; for he is a mean man that draweth not some Clients after him. A e there not many in the midst of us that make their way to God by renouncing their Baptism, when once their fancy doth but dictate to them a vanity in that outward Ordinance, and their tongues are filled with vilifying invectives, calling it beggarly Element, carnal Ordinance, outward and groundless Ceremony, badg of Antichrist, Superstitious administration ; their hearts are as full of joy as they can hold, now they are full of courage, can come with freedom and full assurance to God, being : as they pretend baptized with the Spirit and fire ; now they boldly joyn themselves to that assembly they call the Church of God,

G

and

and despising all outward Ordinances, their formal admission must be by a full renunciation of their Baptism and all carnal acts of worship (as they phrase it) that they may serve God in Spirit.

This generation of men must needs appear most grossely ignorant or greatly deluded as to the method of approach to God, and manner of worship to be done unto him. Unto them I would demand, If they be guided by Scripture directions (not Enthusiasmes, and pretended Inspirations) whether Scripture doth not declare, That divided man must make no approach to God? the Spirit of all flesh will be adored with outward acts of worship which he himself hath appointed. Hath God commanded  
Eap-



*Value of Baptisme.* 123

Baptism to no use or end? May bodies not consecrated come nigh to holy Presence? Must not the Lords immediate attendants be distinguished from the rest of the world by some Livery that is obvious and to be seen by every eye? Can the Spirit and Sacred Ordinances of God stand opposite one to the other, and not consistent each with other? And must sincere Grace share stakes with God, giving man the Body and God the Spirit? The Devil may be content with the half of man, for he well knows by that means he doth possess the whole for God will have all or none: they that will draw nigh to his Sanctuary must *love him with all their might, heart, soul and strength*: they that will wait on him, must worship him in

## 124     *The Vertue and*

*Body and Spirit:* They that walk as the redeemed of Christ, must *glorifie him with Soul and Body*, which is their reasonable sacrifice, Rom. 12. 1. For both were bought with a price, 1 Cor. 6. 20. God will part with no part of his purchase, and hath therefore prescribed outward acts of adoration to be bodily performed in the sincerity of Spirit, and appointed the washing of the body with pure water to consecrate and stamp holinesse on the outward man, as well as the sprinkling of the heart for the inward: the exercise of the body in the outward acts of worship without the Spirit, is plain hypocrisie; and the exercise of the Spirit without the Bodies subjection to outward Ordinances, is positive profanenesse; such is the  
Souls

*Value of Baptisme.* 125

Souls influence on the Body, that if it awfully apprehend Majesty it will make the bodily members to expresse it. In vain is heart Subjection pretended where the yoke of outward Ordinances is broken from the neck: What likelyhood of Loyalty from such as scorne the Livery? Sad is that Sanctity that sets at enmity Gods Spirit and Sacred Ordinances: Cursed is that cry of holiness that cryeth down Divine order and Ordinances: Rebellious is that Assembly whose Incorporation is a renunciation of the matter and method of Gods Worship: Dreadful must needs be Gods approach to that people that draw nigh unto him not duly consecrated to that end by Baptism, and touch the holy things of God in his As-

sembly, not having the body washed with pure water I have lost my little skill in Scripture-Calcuination, if such perish not in the gain saying of *Korah*, and occasion not a *P.rz.vzzab* in Israel

Whilest some disown Baptisme as an outward Ordinance, by the Spirit of Familism disowning all outward administrations; There are others that will joyn with us in condemning them, and consent that God must be worshipped by bodily acts of Religion. yet they find no way of access to God, but by receding from the baptism they had received, and disowning the consecrating, Faith-encouraging use of the washing of their bodies in pure water to which they have been subject. These are our *Anti-pædo-*

*pædobaptist* become actual *Anabaptists*, who quarrelling at Infants interest unto Baptism and the Administrators thereof, do disown all relation they have had to the Church, and the priviledges they injoyed by their Baptism; and disavowing the holinesse thereby conferred, they declare themselves to have been cozened when Christned: and although they have sometime deemed themselves the people of God, sanctified by the washing of water, in Covenant with God, and sweet Communion with his people; Now they declare themselves to be aliens and strangers to the Commonwealth of Israel, without hope, without God, and without Christ in the world, and therefore renouncing this baptism they seek another way

of accessse to God, and by an imagined Baptism of their own creation, they encourage their spirits and stamp holinesse upon themselves, and pretend to joyn themselves to the assemblies of the Lords people, declaring all others to be dogs, and only themselves the children of the Kingdom; all others to be in the high-ways and hedges, and themselves the only Church of Christ to whom men must be joyned on pain of Eternal Damnation. When I consider these men, I cannot but consider the impetuous violence of an Erroneous judgment in hurrying to irregular practise, and the giddy preposterous zeal that is produced by Reason-darkning fancy: this carriage doth plainly bespeak these men  
to.

to be greatly irrational and grossely ignorant.

First, *They appear to be greatly Irrational*, and that because they nullifie Gods Ordinances by mistaken or miscarried circumstances, which no way destroy their essence: Their ground is, *Infants ought not to be Baptized, and they were Baptized in their infancy*; their ignorant parents in their ignorance did superstitiously cause them to be sprinkled by some unworthy Sir John or other, and hereby they were cozened; but now they thank God they see the superstition of Baby-sprinkling, and therefore will have their bodies washed, and joyn themselves to the Baptized Saints. Unto this Plea of theirs, I wish they had reason enough to see the irrationality

of it ; for presuppose ( which is not true ) that infants have no right to Baptism , it will not thence follow that Infant-baptism is superstitious , void and null. For Baptism is Gods Ordinance, Christs own Institution ; Age or Infancy are but circumstances directing the subject to whom it is applyed, and is not essential to the Ordinance: if Baptism be a worship according to the mind of Christ, then Infant baptisme is out of all danger or possibility of will-worship , in case infants were not (as undoubtedly they are) within the Verge, yet their baptism can be no Will-worship, for we set not up the Ordinance we apply to them, but make application of the Ordinance Christ instituted ; so that our greatest guilt is misapplication of  
of



*Value of Baptisme.* 131

of worship instituted by God not deviling any worship on our own heads; so that they do irrational'y charge the corruption of an Ordinance and misapplication of an Institution with Superstition; and thus corruption in a circumstance they imagine to nullifie the Ordinance, and improve to a nonentite of their Baptism; most irrationally making the Age essential to the Ordinance, which God never did so appoint in either Old or New Testament-times, either in the initiating Seal of Circumcision or Baptism: God did indeed direct Circumcision to be applyed at the Eighth day, but the direction of the Age is distinct from the institution of the Ordinance, and not of the Essence thereof, otherwise none might be

be Circumcized after the eighth day to have their Circumcision valid and of force : under the New Testament we have neither institution of the Age, nor subsequent direction for it, save only the qualification of the subject, as being made Disciples, brought into a propriety to the Promise, and the like, of what age soever, unlesse our Anabaptists will make Christ's Baptism the institution of the Ordinance and age to which it is to be applyed ; and then I do believe their latter Baptism will be as void as the former, for I believe they are younger or elder, very few of the just direct age of the Lord Jesus when Baptized ; so that the Age can no way be made essential to the Ordinance : the corruption circumstantial will  
not

*Value of Baptisme.* 133

not bring upon it an nonentitie  
and necessity of rebaptization,  
though they might have cause  
to bewail the sin of their pa-  
rents in corruptly misapplying  
Gods Seal, but what necessity  
is there of plucking it off, and  
Cancelling the Covenant of  
God to them confirmed? I  
cannot believe that if a Jew had  
been Circumcised before the  
Eighth day, that he would have  
renounced the Circumcision be-  
cause misapplyed in point of  
time by his neglective parents:  
deviations from order may  
be profanenesse to be rebuked,  
but cannot be destructive to the  
Ordinance that the priviledges  
thereof should be lost, and it be  
reiterated: I do not believe  
that these men will Disfranchise  
themselves of the priviledges of  
a Free-man of *London* though  
they

they were incorporated before the age directed by the Rules of the Chamber for admitting Free-men. Methinks their Reason should be a Chancery of more equity then to cut themselves off from the Congregation of Gods people, and cast off the liber y of access, because of their unseasonable and too early Baptism. If the Church on such a miscarried circumstance should disfranchise them, or deny their relation to the household of Faith, she were deservedly censured for cruel severity, and her *summum ius* must needs be deemed *summa injuria*: the greatest wrong is to punish failed circumstances with the highest severity due to the greatest crimes. Only blind zeal and irrational folly is censorious to themselves to dis-

OWN

own their own interest on such a ground as will not warrant the Church to deprive them of it. Self-execution under the greatest guilt, differs little from murder, but must needs be sinfully violent when extended in measure beyond the nature of the fault. Self-excommunication on so slight a ground cannot but be the sting of an awakened conscience apprehensive of the priviledges lost: the out cry of such a conscience must needs be this, Oh wretch! my parents misapplied the Seal, and therefore I have cast off the Covenant by my own will, and deprived my self of those blessed enjoyments the hand of justice never demanded from me. Oh cruelty! self cruelty. How justly might God say Amen to thy self, censure and blind thee  
under.

136      *The Vertue and*  
under thy losse for ever.

But to extenuate this irrationality in the rejection of their Baptism received in infancy they (endeavouring to master by number of exceptions under the want of faith) further plead, *Why, but we were Baptized by some unworthy Minister, and in a superstitious manner, with the Ceremonies of the Church and sign of the Cross;* and therefore we cannot make that baptism a ground of Faith in the approach to God. And hereby they do but act their irrationality the further; for suppose ye were Baptized by an unworthy Minister, yet he was a *Minister*: though the Essence of the Ordinance may depend on the *Authority*, yet not on the *Dignity of the Administrator*.  
The.

The wickednesse of an Embassador maketh not his Embassie concluded to be void and vain ; the impression of a lawfully Commissionated Judge though he be unjust , is valid and of force ; the Grant of a cruel King and profane Prince will be by these men admitted as the substantial binding Charter of the peoples Priviledges : we read often of the profanenesse of the Priests of Israel , but never of a nonentitie brought upon Gods Ordinances in their hand : If they be in *Moses* Chair , though we must not *do as they do*, we are bound to the *attention and obedience of what they say*. It is not impossible for a man to preach to others, and himself be a cast away. I never read that the Baptism of those Baptized by  
the

the unworthy hand of Judas was ever pronounced void or null. A pure Ordinance is unhandsome in a profane hand, but yet its essence is not impaired: it is Gods Ordinance effectual to its end. So that if they were Baptized by Ministers though unworthy (wherein I wish charity be not violated, for that many know not who they were they do censure as unworthy; nay, some worthy men to themselves, so known, they now call unworthy) it is a corruption consistent with the essence of the Ordinance, not any way destructive to its being. The same is to be said for the annexed Ceremonies that they were profanely added, but yet did not nullifie the Ordinance, but it stands in full force as a ground



*Value of Baptisme.* 139

ground of confidence in access to God.

But secondly, As they appear greatly irrational in inferring more then their premises will allow, so they are *Grossly ignorant*; nay, I fear many wilfully shutting their eyes may be charged to be *grossly obstinate*: They renounce their Baptism under the notion of Superstition, not considering they *run into the sin of Sacrilege*; charity must perswade us these men understand not the method and ministration of the Covenant of Grace, otherwise they could never charge Infant Baptism with superstition, which is the very application of Gods Ordinance to its proper subjects, and so Sacrilegiously rob God, his Church, believing parents, and  
their

*their children* of those holy duties and Dignities that belong unto them. Have we not before noted, that they who are in Covenant with God ought to be Baptized? and is not this the principle wherein we all agree? And if these men know any thing of the method and ministrations of the Covenant, must they not needs confesse, That the natural issue of one or both believing Parents are in Covenant? as we have before proved; and so fit subjects for Baptism, that may and must be made partakers of the first initiating Seal, of which God hath made them capable in their Passive age and estate. Can any stand convinced that such infants are as soon as born the Lords *Heritage*, Psal. 127.3. *The Lords servants*, Lev.

## *Value of Baptisme. 141*

Lev 25.42. Children begotten  
to him, Ezek. 16.20, 21. Holy  
ones, Rom. 11.16. 1 Cor. 7.14.  
Children of the Covenant, Act.  
4.25. To whom belongs the  
promise, Act. 2.28. Interessed  
in the priviledges of the people  
of God, Mar. 10.14. and with-  
hold the keeper of the Sanctu-  
ary and Stewards of Gods  
household from setting of Gods  
mark in their flesh, or with-  
stand their dedication unto  
God? Must not we give Ca-  
sar the things that are Ca-  
sars, and God the things that  
are Gods? Will not God ac-  
count it a Robbery t'at they  
which are his shall be with-  
held from him? Again, can  
any consider the issue of be-  
lieving Parents to be the  
Churches Children, begotten  
to the Lord Ezek 16.20. an  
holy seed scattered for her in-  
crease

crease, and yet snatch them out of her armes, and cast them out of her bosome into the wide wildernesse of the world. Shall not the Church lament and refuse to be comforted whilest she is bereaved of her babes, and as a Bear robbed of her whelps Will not such robbery prove her ruine, and the drying up her seed hinder her increase and make her barren and fruitlesse? Again, shall the children of such believing parents be borne members into the household of Faith, and not be incorporated by Baptism? Shall Loyalty be their born duty and not Gods Livery their dignity? Shall the Covenant of Grace be the Charter of their priviledge and the Seals not be applyed to them as they are capable of re-

receiving them? Shall they be holy in their kind, and the badge of distinction be denyed them? If any thing would make a new born babe to speak, sure this *Sacriledge* would do it: there is reason for the real demand that is fabled of one *Rumball*, Son to an English King, at *Brackely* in *Northamptonshire*, that as soon as he was born he requested to be Baptized for that he was a Christian. Is it not a cruel *Sacriledge* to shut out of the Ark of *Salvation* such whose title to entrance cannot be denyed? Yet further, is Baptism the only visible evidence God hath given to parents of the extent of the Covenant to their children, and shall any deprive them of this reason of Love, cause of joy,

## 142 *The Verue and*

joy, ground of Faith in prayer, and spur to duty in dedication, to God, and education of their children for God? So that these things considered, such as on this ground of being Baptized in infancy do renounce thir Baptism, do out of ignorance of Gods Covenant commit most horrid Sacriledge by robbing God of his Heritage, the Church of Children, and the be-efits of the administration of Baptism to infants (which by Gods grace I shall shew to be great) the children of believing parents of their *Seal of the Covenant of which they are capable*, and their Parents of that ground of Faith the administration of the Covenant doth award them. And so they geve us cause not only to charge them with irrationality in fancying

*Value of Baptisme.* 145

crying Gods holy Ordinance to be superstition, but in the language of the Apostle to say, *Thou that abhorrest Idols dost commit Sacrilege*, Rom. 2 22. So that not only Groundlessly, but even contrary to Divine method and order, they disowning the regular washing of their body in pure water, do divest themselves of that Seal of Sanctity and vesture of holinesse by which they were fitted for a confident approach to God, and decline the assemblies of Gods people, in which alone the Lord is to be adored, and joyn themselves to *false assemblies*, where they are consecrated to, and come before God in a way that is not of his appointment, nor can expect his approvement. how high soever false hopes and joyes may car-

H ry

ry their spirits. For those to whom they joyn are divided from the Church of Christ and void of all commission to administer the holy things of God: if you look at their *constitution*, you shall find it is no other then *self-congregation*, with the cry of all the Lords people are holy, and invectives against Aaron and Moses as they which take too much upon them; the which I could never yet find warranted in Scripture, but is remarkably condemned in the company of Korah that were thus constituted: Ministerial authority is no lesse essential to Constitute a Church of Christ, then Magistratical to constitute a Corporation or Company: my little skill in Politicks could never see that *self-congregation could consti-*



## Value of Baptisme. 147

ture any body, but that which  
is seditions or Schismatic? And  
as Korah seems to have been  
the Counsellor of their Con-  
stitution, so Jerobeam seems to  
be of their Consecration, for  
he that will may make himself  
a Priest, even the lowest of the  
people are Ministers to the Lord,  
uncalled and unqualified they  
presume to administer holy  
things; which is a shadow and  
appearance of Divine worship,  
but a real building of *Altars*  
besides the Altar of the Lord;  
and gives just cause to the peo-  
ple of God (truly pious and  
pursuing the truth of his Or-  
dinances) to pray as the Church  
in Jeroboam's dayes, Tell me, O  
thou who art my Soul loveth, where  
thou seekest thy flock, where  
thou makest them to rest at  
noon, for why should I turn a-  
side

## 148 *The Virtue and*

*side by the flocks of thy companions?* (so seem and pretend to be) *Cant. 1. 7.* So that their exchange of the Baptism they renounce for that they now receive, is a profaning of themselves, who once were an holy people to the Lord, and by false wayes of sanctity to set themselves at a greater distance from God, and to shake, nay to rake up the Foundations of their Faith; and exchange their assurance rightly grounded on their Baptism, for a fond presumption flowing from Sacrilegious notions and false worship, which must at the last fall into the hands of the living God, and be found as stubble before a consuming fire, because unconsecrated in the presence of an holy God: for never to be sanctified and after  
to

*Value of Baptism.* 149

to be profaned is all one in its event and issue, they that contemn and they that cast off Gods holy Ordinance shall fall into the same condemnation.

The <sup>2d</sup> ~~second~~ sort to be reproved as carrying Contradictorily to this qualification to confide & approach to God, are such as *disregard the administration of Baptism unto others*: These acknowledge the use and benefit of having the body washed with pure water. but by the rudenesse of their behaviour do declare themselves ignorant or insensible of its holy nature and consecrating use. These are such as *drive the Sacrament*, in its administration *into corners* and *continue not in the Congregation* in the administration of it; they

H 3. think.

think it is convenient children be baptized, but the solemnity thereof is to them strange and needless, they will call some few friends together, & call in to baptize it any Minister that flubbers over the act as easily as they desire, and in a way of complement get the work done, never considering it is a Church Ordinance, and of due belongs to the whole assembly, not particular families or persons, nor with any reverence composing themselves to a solemn and Religious act of dedication to God, many in this case carry toward the Ordinance as a meer *Complement*; to please wife, kinsfolk or neighbours they will have their Children Baptized, and the civilities thereunto belonging being past they think themselves well rid of a piece

piece of trouble, and never devote themselves to any Religion in the application of this Ordinance. Incorporation into the household of Faith, Dedication to an holy God is not in their thoughts, their prayes proclaim not any sense of a Covenant privilege, nor doth their Prayers pursue God for his blessing on his own Ordinance, they break not through any difficulties to present their children to God in the Assemblies of his people, they think not the silent suffrages of the Society of any moment in the incorporation of a Member, or supplications of any virtue to an Ordinance of sanctification, but as unaffected with these things. they get the work done, the child Baptized, they neither care where, how, or by

H 4                      whom,

whom, for when its done they have done.

And others are in this respect no lesse blame-worthy, who turn their backs rudely and irreverently when Baptism is administred, whilst the Word, Prayer and other Ordinances are in hand, they sit composedly in the Congregation. but when Baptisme comes in hand they poss out of the Church. as if this were *not worth their attendance, or tended any way to their advantage.* Unto these I would say, *Is not Baptism an Ordinance of God & act of worship to his people* Is it not an Ordinance of *Incorporation into the body of the Church of God*, of which thou art a member? oughtest not thou to take them into society, and by thy presence to  
witness

*Value of Baptisme. 153*

witnesse their relation; thou givest them little honour who hast no patience to attend their solemn admission into the society of the Saints. Is not Baptism *the Seal of the Covenant, the Sanctifying Ordinance of access to God?* Admirest thou it not matter of Mediation concerning *Mans Guilt, Gods Grace, the Covenant of Salvation between God and man,* whereby thou mayest be edified? Is not the Baptism of a Christian of high concernment? Doth it not tye the Baptized to great and many engagements? Are they not *obnoxious to many temptations,* to violate the Covenant? Is not Baptisme the Ordinance of holiness? Gods blessing needful to make it holy and prayers of the Church the way to obtain Gods blessing, that thou mayest

## 154      *The Vertue and*

**est** away and followest not the Ordinance with thy prayer? Can a conscience awed by the sanctity of any Ordinance and affected with the holinesse of God to be adored, dispense with the neglect and contempt of other Ordinances equally holy, nay, in order the first of, and that without which other Ordinances must not be used?

The fourth sort of such whose practise doth militate with the consecrating nature of Baptisme, are such *who disesteem their own Baptisme owned and adkared unto*: many have had their bodies washed with pure water, and would not be without their Baptism for all the world, but yet as for any great benefit they ever received by it, they know no reason they have to esteem it at so high a rate: They never read any thing of  
D.vine



*Value of Baptisme.* 155

Divine favour in their Baptism, nor from it reaped either counsel or comfort; the reflections of duty and dignity are to them strange and unusuall, Baptism having once passed on their bodies come no more into their minds. It is not to them engagement to, or encouragement in duty or drawing nigh to God; the which as it *exposeth the Ordinance to contempt not imaginable*, so it bespeaks such souls to be *unspeakably ignorant or insensible of the nature, use and end of the washing of the body with pure water*; for can any soul that understands and believes Baptism to be a pledge of Divine affection, live under it without observation of Gods peculiar love to them above others who want it? Can any  
stand

156 *The Vertue and*

stand convinced, That the Seal of God is in their flesh, and not lay claim to God by so visible a ground of claim? Can any say that by Baptism they are purg'd from the corruptions that are in the world through lust, and live in sin? Can any consider hereby they are called out of the world and consecrated to the worship of one God Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and neglect directed acts of Adoration, the holy service that is assigned by their Lord and King? much lesse shuld such Apostatize from the Profession of that Name, and run into open Rebellion against him with whom they stand confederated, bound in Covenant? Can any think Baptisme to be the bond of union and nerve of  
in-

*Value of Baptisme.* 157

incorporation with the Church of Christ, and not Sympatize with her under all the changes of her condition? much lesse can such make Schisms in, or separation from her body, and forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is. Much is the advantage Baptism once received may administer to a sinner all his dayes if by *rational acts of faith* it were improved, either as a *moral instrument* or outward sign exhibiting matter of meditation, or as a *Divine Ordinance* and Seal of the righteousness by Faith, established to assure of the promises of Grace and Salvation. And yet (to our shame be it spoken) how little thereof is reaped by regardlesse we? Baptism is a memorial of our misery, and  
Gods

Gods mercy; a manifest expression of that natural uncleannesse which sets us at a distance from God and eminent act of sanctifying unto an accessse to God; and yet how many make no use of it, nor find matter of meditation by it? God hath appointed it an instrument of Regeneration and Salvation, how few find these effects produced by it? nay, improve it thereunto. It is that Seal that assures of interest in all the promises of Grace, yet when do men propound it to themselves as a ground of Faith or plead it in prayer? How many live in such profanenesse that the Church may charge them to have forgotten that they were purged from their old sin; and God may complain that they have

## *Value of Baptisme.* 159

have broken their Baptismal Oath: yet Baptism is to them a mean and weak argument of conviction. When I consider the dulnesse of profane Christians under the enforcements of their Baptism, even ministerially urged, I could wish according the sometime custome used in the Primitive times of the Church, when men are Baptized they might leave behind them a white garment, as a witnesse of their Baptism, that so we might upbraid wicked men, as the Deacon of the Church did *Elvid-phorus* when revolted from the Faith, saying, *O, Elpidophorus, I will kee p this white garment as a monument against thee to all Eternity.* When I consider the Scripture aggravating guilt with this circumstance

thy

they have forgotten that they were purged; it dictates to my mind that the condemnation of Christians will be more grievous because of their Baptism; *If this water quench not Lust, it will make Wrath burn more vehemently*: Though I cannot consent to the Novatians cruel and groundlesse conclusion, *That sin after Bap'tism is unpardonable*; I dare affirm, *That every sin not resisted by Bap'tism will be more then ordinarily damnable to the Bap'tized*. What an answer to every temptation unto sin is the soul furnished withal, that is apprehensive that in Baptism he did renounce the flesh the world and the devil, and devote himself to a conformity to the death of Christ, and stands dedicated to a holy God, in whose presence

*Value of Baptisme. 161*

sence he may not presume defiled with sin. . This Argument if improved by a Rational act of Faith is of more advantage, because it is plaine and common, ready at hand to reflect, and easie to be understood, and obvious to the eye of men without and within the Church, by which we are lyable to be upbraided by the very enemies of Christ: That we are Baptized the whole Church will witness, and shall not we have recourse unto our Baptism as a bar to our profanenesse? Shall Circumcised Israel live in the vilenesse and vanity of the uncircumcised Gentiles? And hath God made Baptism a badge of distinction between the holy and prophane, and shall we not make it a bar of division between their unclean Lusts and  
ours.

162      *The Vertue and*

our holy Lives? to live without mortification of sin, and quickning to all holy duties, do h clearly declare we have never yet understood the nature of Baptism, nor used it to its end.

As this Deadnesse in sin, *so the Despondency of the Spirit in Duty*, to which even the best of men are subject, doth witness a disesteem and disregard of their Baptism, of which they can sometime boast, though in it they cannot rejoyce. A right apprehension and real sense of Baptisme as the qualification of confident approach to God would dissolve many doubts, if but duely urged by Faith. Ordinances of God are given for our encouragements, but rational acts of Faith must pass from us to enforce them to their end:



end: What is said of the Word is true of Baptism, it profits not because not mingled with Faith in them that hear it: many a sad soul comes tremblingly into Gods presence and goes more troubled out, and the reason is, they do not rightly husband Gods Ordinances to the soul; they passe from Ordinance to Ordinance, but never consider t<sup>e</sup> one entitles to and fits for the enjoyment of another. They suck no sweetnesse from all Sacred administrations, sometimes they abstain from, and oftentimes approach to God in his Ordinances and the discharge of holy duties, as afraid they have no right to nor fitnesse for these priviledges. yet are sanctified by the washing of water; they complain they see no interest

164 · *The Vertue and*

terest in the Covenant, and yet *the Seal of the Covenant is in their flesh*; they cry out they are aliens and strangers to the Commonwealth of Israel, and yet are *Baptiz'd into one body*, and incorporated into the Congregation of the Saints; they dare not call God Father, yet were *children begotten unto him*, bear his marke, and as soon as born were by him owned and placed in the bosome of his Church, and do wear the coat he prepared for his *Joseph*. They see many good things promised in the Covenant but know not how to claim any of them in Prayer, and they have the *Broad-Seal of heaven to secure their title*. Unto these souls let me freely say, Shall God give you a ground of encouragement? will you not use it?

*Value of Baptisme.* 165

it? Shall he call for an approach in full assurance, *for th. & the body is washed with pure water*, and will you not yield it? D. d God mock you, when he gave you the dignity of Baptisme, or is it not your madness that makes it not a check to your griefs, and curb to your fears? Shall your practice proclaim the truth of that which the Papists have endeavoured to charge on the Reformed Churches, viz. *That they make Baptism a nudum signum, a bare empty sign of no use or advantage to the Soul.* Is Gods seal in vain, and sanctification by the washing of water to no purpose? and matriculation into his household a matter of no moment? that thou makest them no ground of Faith, nor encouragement to thy soul?

Was

Was not Circumcision of great benefit to the Jewes? did not God claim them by it when gone astray from him? and they claim God when deserting them? Is that an engagement to divine faithfulness, and may not thy Faith make it thy encouragement to appear before him? did God complement when he annexed Baptism to the Covenant, and called it *The Seal of the righteousness of Faith*? or dost not thou rather cozen thy self of the comforts the Ordinance do really and according to divine designment exhibit? It is indeed true, Salvation is not conferred *op re operato*, by the act done and meer application of the water, yet it is thereby assured to the Soul, that by acts of Faith shall duly argue

*Value of Baptisme. 167.*

its interest. The Privy-Seal is the clearest token of affection & to be pursued, but is the Broad-Seal of no authority or advantage to be retained and improved? The outward Ordinance is not without inward Grace to be depended on as sufficient to Salvation, but inward grace duly reflects the outward Ordinance as Gods great mercy and the ground of Faith and encouragement to it self. The Moral swasion of any Ordinance is too short to sanctifie or solace any Spirit without supernatural Grace: but supernatural Grace comes not into any soul to convince or comfort but by a moral improvement of every Ordinance by rational meditation of its nature, use and end. Many sit under Gods Ordinances and make most sad complaints they

they find no profit in them, when the reason is in themselves; they cry out God must do all, work in them to will and to do at his own pleasure, which is indeed true, but they consider not Gods method of working grace or comfort in any souls; he alwayes deales with men like themselves as they are reasonable creatures, and have a power of discourse, and therefore his Ordinances are moral instruments by due discourses to enforce their end. We have reason to check some under the Ordinances as the Disciples were checked from heaven for their posture in the Lord his ascension, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing? this Jesus that is taken from you shall so come as you have seen him go into heaven, A.C. 1. 11*

As if the voice had said, *Considerations of his return better become you, than silent observations of his present going.* So I say, Why doe many enjoy Gods Ordinances, and not goe home and consider them? must we run so far from free will, as to run out of our wits? Let such men, as make not their Baptism a moral engagement to, and encouragement in their access to God, know, that they appear ignorant or sinfully insensible of its nature, and expose it to great contempt. Can any thing more easily cast a soul into contempt of an Ordinance, than its unprofitableness and unusefulness? The grand cause of all the blasphemie that our age doth belch out against Baptism, is the little benefit men finde it brings them: not by reason of any defect

fect in the Ordinance, but their own neglect to improve it as a ground of faith, guard against sin, and special qualification of access to God.

The fifth sort, that carrie contradictorily to this consecrating nature of Baptisme, are such, *who declare not to theirs baptized, the dignity and duty of their Baptisme.* Men doe with much zeal present their children to Baptism, but never minde to acquaint them of their priviledge, or instruct them in the nature of so holy an Ordinance: they are carefull to bring them up to some Trade or Calling; to acquaint them with all external rights and priviledges, and the past ground of claim, to all future enjoyments in the world; but education in the fear and nurture of the Lord, is to them unusual;



*Value of Baptisme.* 171

unusual; and the affecting them with *baptismal* privileges and *Church Rites*, or the acquainting them with *Covenant interest* and *ground of claim*, as to spiritual mercies and soul enjoyments, is the last and least of their endeavors. Well may we observe, the men of this world are wiser in their generations, than the children of the Kingdom. Common prudence, if Scripture were silent, would direct a more serious instruction of our children, in the nature of their Baptisme: Shall they be begotten to the Lord, and not be made to know whose children they are? and how they came by that relation? Shall they be incorporated into the body of the Church, and not know the family and household to which they belong? Shall holyness be stamped upon

I 2                      them

them, and they not be made to know that they are *out of the common lump and mass of mankind*? Shall the *Covenant of God* be in *their flesh*, and they not know the *Charter* sealed, and *Conditions* to be performed? In a word, Shall they be *sanctified* by the washing of water, and not made sensible, that they stand *consecrated unto holy service*, and *dedicated* to the worship of an holy God, *Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost*; and therefore ought not to stain themselves with guilt, but carrie as an holy people peculiar to the Lord? that must wait on him, because they wear his livery; and may worship in his presence with confidence, because their bodies have been washed with pure water. I did in the last branch of this Use, blame them  
that

*Value of Baptisme.* 173

that *disesteem* and *disregard* their own *Baptisme*, and that was but the effect of this sin, Our progenitors neglected us, and we neglect our posterity, as to their instruction in the nature of divine Ordinances. How shall they esteem that, wherein they see no excellencie; or improve that privilege, of whose nature they are ignorant. How shall they claime the promises, who neither understand what they are, or on what ground to be claimed? What conscience can they make of dutie who doe not know themselves under sacred obligation? What confidence can they have in access to God, who know not themselves consecrated? If men have in them parental affection to their children, and doe care for their future good, we must needs con-

glide they sought no more in their Baptisme, than friends satisfaction, and a Formal Religious complement; and so not any special Soul saving priviledges thereby conferred? for charity forbids us to thinke they would bring up their children in the ignorance and incapacity of claiming such *high priviledges*, and rationally improving to *holy engagements*, if themselves were affected with them, or they had any sense of duty as to such Religious education, which should indeed spur their *natural affection* to the discharge thereof. Little doe men consider that the same God that gave babes the right to the initiating seals of the Covenant, did provide *catechising*, as the way to make them know their priviledge. He to whom they are born, hath provided

vided *milk* for their nourishment, no less than *meat* for stronger men, and hath committed them as his lambs, to the care of his Church, and charged it, as the duty of their Parents, to *baptize them in the feare and nurture of the Lord*: So that such Parents who doe not seriously instruct their seed in the solemn Bond of their relation to God and his Church, the suitable qualification by which they are fitted for divine communion, & the seal of the Covenant, that assureth them of the high priviledges of Salvation, doe not only slight this holy Ordinance of Baptisme, but also sinfully transgress Gods command, shew their natural affection to be diverted from its right channel, *cure for the chiefest good*, and set their children under an inevitable necessity of

slighting the Ordinance, & starting aside from God, to whom they know no relation. We finde it our grief, that our children are *prophane*, when it is no other than the production of *our own neglect*: We can easily complain of their impietie; but where is the man, that as soon as his child is sensible, doth season him with the knowledge of his miserie by sin, Gods mercy in the Covenant of Grace, and his special engagement to holiness, for that he beares on him the name of God from his very birth, and that imprinted by his Baptisme, when his body was washed with pure water.

The sixth and last sort, whose principles and practise doe plainly millitate against the nature of Baptisme, and cleerly doe contradict the same, are such, *who deny*

*Value of Baptisme.* 177

deny the baptized the libertie of access to God in the assemblies of his people. This I well know to relate unto the most eminent professors of Gospel order, and pretenders unto pietie, that are among us; and therefore the most tender rebuke will seem to be railing violence and bitterness: But be it what it will, sin against Gods Ordinances must not pass without a zealous and serious reproof. Such among us as affect the term of *Congregational Brethren*, in the gathering of their Churches, run into an extreme as farre wide on the one hand, as the loose levelling Familists and Anabaptists are on the other: These dictate a liberty of access to the unbaptized, and those denie it to the baptized. We must needs imagine they agree both in one principle,

## 178 *The Vertue and*

that *Baptisme* is not the ground of communion with the Church visible, nor qualification of access to God; For if it be otherwise, as we have noted, it must be prophaneness to admit without it; and they have need of good warrant that will acquit themselves from impietie, in excluding the baptized from these priviledges. That such are among us, who debarre the baptized from their priviledges, is so obvious to every observant eye of the now only cryed up *Church Way*, that I need not much urge demonstrations thereof. I well know some whose practice proclaim it, in their principles will disown it: but it is the property of that congregating way, to couch their principles until their practice have proved their truth and goodness, and proclaimed them



to others. But if in the termes charged any shall deny this to be acted among us, I shall desire to understand why they declare privately and publickly *men baptized*, to be strangers to God and his Covenant? why doe they decline communion with, and a care of baptized soules, as members of the Church? and dictate a necessitie of their coming into Church-way and fellowship? and why doe they direct other wayes for admission of Church members? is there any terms more ordinarie in the mouthes of the *congregated saints* towards those whom they live amongst, than *doggs*, *wichets*, *unbelievers*, not in a Church way? Doe not the pastors of these private (it may offend if I say separate) assemblies in their publique ministrie, speak unto  
their

their baptized hearers as *aliens*, strangers, to the Covenant and Common-wealth of *Israel*, men in the High-ways and Hedges? Doe they not call them into their self congregated and constituted Churches, as the only Churches of Jesus Christ? Doe not the particular members of these assemblies appropriate to themselves the title of *saints*, *believers*, *the people of God*, *the brethren*? If they know or deale with a man professing the same God and Christ, baptized, and of a Godly conversation, but not in their Church-way, they cannot know him in any Christian relation; but can oppose to him a member of their private assembly, by the name of *brother such an one* —, as if the other were no brother. Nay further, do not they decline communion

*Value of Baptisme.* 181

with the baptized even such whom they cannot charge with any visible prophaneness, and against whom the Church never proceeded in censure? Hence they withdraw themselves from publique assemblies in their speciall administration of Church priviledges, denominate themselves *the Church*, and decline all *Church actions* towards such as come not into their *Church-ways*; though their *Pastors* will possesse the places, and make a shift to compell the (late cried down) parochial maintenance, yet of the people in common they take no charge: Brethren will not own them as objects of first or second admonition; Pastors will neither admit to the Lords table the unblameable parents, nor baptize or catechize their Children, nor

exer-

exercise any act of discipline towards the disorderly, in order to their conviction and salvation; but in all things so demean themselves towards the baptized as men without the pale of the Church, meere heathen, for Church ministrations are as much reserved from them, as from such who never yet had holiness stamped on them: And if any doe incline to associate with them in the holy things of God, they must bee *admitted Members*, and enter at the door of a *Church-Covenant* or mutual agreement among themselves and declaration of the worke of Grace upon their hearts, and their experiences of God, which these Congregational-men have set up. If this dialect and deportment doe not declare that liberty of access to God, is  
the

*Value of Baptisme.* 183

the assemblies of his people is denied to the baptized, I know not how to judge it : And how this will consist with the nature, use and end of Baptisme, I cannot discern. If by the washing of water, we were sanctified, how were we prophaned and again laid common ? I never yet could understand any divine rejection ; I am sure it is much contrarie to Gods wonted method and patience, to cast off a people adhering to him, though subject to many aberrations and vile actions towards him ; and the extraordinarie pleasure of God is yet to be manifested : And if God count us *holy*, and continue the libertie of our access to him in his Ordinance, they must produce a good commission that shall cast us out, as *prophane and unclean*, if they expect

pect we should be therewithall contented. If Baptisme doe incorporate into the Church of God, doth it not intitle to all the priviledges of the Church, and binde us to use them, and the Church to allow us the use of them, according to our capacitie? If we are baptized into one bodie, have we not the same relation to them that others have? Are we not all of one familie, members of one bodie, and brethren, sonnes of the same father? Ought not all the Church to be the Pastors charge? Is not the rebuke of the disorderly his duty, as well as his encouragement of the orderly? Doth not Baptisme so knit us one unto another, that we are bound to watch over one another, and doe all brotherly duties? Why else doth the Apo-  
le

*Value of Baptisme.* 185

file make it an argument, there is one Baptisme, Ephes. 4. we are all-baptized into one bodie. I would fain know of what use Baptisme is to them: is it not the same to others baptized? To count the baptized *dogges*, *men without*, to disown their brotherhood, and the like, must needs denie that Baptisme is the dore of admission into the Church, and yet this in terms they will not say, though they carrie towards them *as without*, and call them to be members of the Church, who are members of the Church on as good a ground and as cleer a method as themselves: If this be not a solecisme in Christianitie, I know not how to make any. As for their admission into the Church by *Covenant, Agreement, or profession*, it is cleerly without *Scripture*

ture

*ture, prescription, or primitive president, that ever I could yet finde : and I can deem it no other than an inhumane invention (if I may not call superstition, the countenance of which it bears in my eye, whilst it stands in the place of Baptisme, & is made the only way of consecration unto Church communion, whereby it plainly supplants Gods Ordinance.) These things I note, but cannot stand to debate, intending a reproof, not dispute, and to let men see the sinfulness of this sacred way of independence, and gathering of Churches out of Churches, whilst it stands guilty of a contempt of Gods way of access unto him, and admission into his Church of censorious uncharitableness towards their brethren invested with the reason of relation to the Lords people,*



*Value of Baptisme.* 187

ple, and constitution of Church membership, in a way of meer humane invention. I confesse I have heard it often noted, that the difference between Independents and others, is not so much as to maintain an irreconcilable distance : and I say so too : I could wish they were more friendlyly united. As to the single point of Discipline, they shall have my consent for a brotherly toleration of its exercise, till they are weary of it. But as for their separation from the Churches of Jesus Christ, self congregation into a Church, and seclusion of baptized souls, from sacred Ordinances, and the like, they seem to me so repugnant to truth and order, and ruinous to Gods Church and Ordinances, that I cannot, without sinne, but stand a professed enemy thereunto

## 188      *The Vertue and*

unto. Let not men think that I allow the prophaneness of Christians, because I alledge their interest in the cōmon administration of the Covenant; or that I think their enjoyment may not be interrupted, because I cannot consent their interest be denied them. I have learned to distinguish between *right and possession*; and where the one is cleer, the other may be justly sometimes withheld. I well know prophane Christians are *unseemly Saints*, yet *Saints*; *scandalous Disciples*, yet *Disciples*; *disorderly Brethren*, yet *Brethren*; *vessels of dishonour*, yet vessels in the *same house to the Masters use*. That Church members be for a time suspended from particular priviledges, may be admitted; but at private brethrens pleasure to be sleighted, as no members, is  
not

I not to be endured. That obstinate incurable members be cut off, is the Church her duty; but that the Church be cast off, is the congregational impietie? Is there baptized persons in works, denying the God they profess? Is there a brother, a drunkard, an adulterer, and the like? Doth not Baptisme appropriate them to the private admonition of particular brethren, and publique inspection of Church officers? Is not the delivering them to Satan, for the buffeting of the flesh, that the soul may be saved, their priviledge by Baptisme? If these holy men would talk of correcting, casting out, cutting off disorderly baptized souls, it would sound well in my ears; but to talk of gathering Churches, coming into Church-way, admission of members, and the

the like., amongst those that bears holiness in their flesh; and have on them the qualification of access to God, sounds so harshly in my eares, that I cannot but abhor it, as inconsistent with the nature of Baptisme, exposing it to contempt, making it of no effect, endangering the subversion of the Church, and the ushering in of Paganisme, whilst the baptized finde themselves rejected, and not looked after, as of any relation to God; they cannot but resigne up themselves to their own lusts, & run into an ignorance of, and estrangedness to God. It seems to me a most just plea, that is made by Christians in common.  
' Were we baptized? why are  
' we disowned, as to relation to  
' God and his Church, and cast  
' out of all the care of the  
Church

*Value of Baptisme.* 191

Church, as if we were thereunto  
to strangers? If the seal of  
God be on us, why doe our  
brethren lift up themselves a-  
bove us, and engross to them-  
selves the titles, termes, privi-  
ledges, that belong in common  
to all baptized souls? If we  
walk unworthy our relation,  
we are willing to be corrected;  
but must we needs lose our in-  
terest and be thrust out of our  
fathers inheritance by our bre-  
thren, our forfeiture never be-  
ing judicially exacted. Gods  
Ordinances we could bear,  
though never so cross to our  
nature, because thereunto we  
are bound by our Baptism; but  
the new wayes pursued by our  
brethren, and to us proposed,  
are grievous to us, because we  
finde them not in the grand  
Charter of our priviledge;  
willingly

‘willingly we would walk with  
‘God in duty, and draw nigh  
‘to him in the assemblies of his  
‘people, for that we are there-  
‘unto consecrated ; but herein  
‘we are debarred, and driven at  
‘a distance, as if *Doggs, not Chil-*  
‘*dren, Heathens, not Christians,*  
‘*Aliens to the Covenant, not*  
‘*Heirs of Grace.* If we goe astray,  
‘we think those that are set over  
‘ought to seek us as sheep, not  
‘suffer us to wander as goats.  
‘We have cause to complain,  
‘that our Shepherds feed them-  
‘selves, *not the flock ; they feed*  
‘*the flock, and clothe them with*  
‘*the wooll ; kill the fat, but feed*  
‘*not the sheep : The weak they*  
‘*have not strengthened, the sick*  
‘*they have not healed, nor have*  
‘*they sought that which was lost,*  
‘*nor brought again, that which*  
‘*was driven away ; but with cru-*  
‘*elty*

*Value of Baptisme. 193*

*'eltie and rigor have they ruled  
'us : We were scattered without  
'a shepherd ; and when we were  
'dispersed, every beast of the field  
'devoured us : We were sheep,  
'though wandring upon every  
'high hill and mountain : Gods  
'flock, though scattered through  
'the earth, and none sought after  
'us. If the Lord Jesus subscribe  
and accept not this complaint  
as just and good, I know no-  
thing of Gospel method or  
order.*

Thus then I have noted the  
vanitie and vileness of those,  
whose carriage contradicts the  
nature of Baptisme, and bespeaks  
them insensible of it, as an espe-  
cial qualification for confidence  
in access to God in the assem-  
blies of his people.

The third and last use of this  
Doctrin, is by way of exhorta-

K

tion

tion unto two especial duties.

First, Acquaint we our selves with the holy nature of Baptisme.

Secondly, Act we the course of our lives and carriage, as those whose bodies are washed with pure water.

Of these give me leave to speake a word in their order, and first of the first.

*Acquaint we our selves with the holy nature of Baptisme* Understand its end, use, and effects: Labour we to know the holiness it stamps on any, the priviledges it confers; and how it confers them, like the divine institution enforcing the duty of subjection to it, and the dignitie received by it. Ignorance is the Nurserie of Error, and Guard of all Prophaneness: All those O. dinance degrading, and vili-  
fying



fying notions that are conceived in mens mindes, blasphemies belched out of their mouthes, and contemptible carriage under and towards Baptisme and the baptized, which we have before taxed, are no other than the mists and filthie fogs of a blinde mind, to be dispersed by a right apprehension of the holy nature thereof. Ignorance is noted in Scripture as the ground of Israels impiety : very often doth God complain, *they know not me, and are a people who will not understand ; my people perish for lack of knowledge.* Knowledge is the propounded cure of all prophaneness and contempt of holy things : it is the principle of Regeneration to be renewed in the spirit of the minde. Our Saviour corrects the prophanation of the Temple by an, it is written,

*my house shall be called, an house of prayer, and dispels all rude traditions, which made the Law of God of none effect, by an exposition of the Law: And the Apostle corrects the prophane use of the Lords Supper, by explaining the nature, form, and use thereof; telling them sometime, this is not to eat the Lords Supper; and other times pointing to the Ordinance, by a, The Cup of blessing which we bless, is the Communion; and an, I received from the Lord, what I delivered unto you. The same is to be the cure of the prophaneness of every Ordinance of God, (viz.) the understanding of its use and nature. They that know not the benefit of a Denison of England, or a Freeman of London, must needs disesteem, disregard, and despise the privileges*

ledges thereof. Is it any marvel to hear men speak, and see men carry contemptibly towards a sealed parchment, whose use and nature he doth not understand; but such as know thereof the use and value, will purchase them at a dear rate, and prize them above many things simply, and in themselves more considerable. In a word, I must say, if men knew that Gods image and authority was set on Baptisme, they would not dare to despise its simplicity and meanness: If they understood it to be the dore of admission into the Church, incorporation into Christs body, and method of matriculation into the household of faith, they could never scorn it, or sit indifferent to it; but must see, as ever they will put on Christ Jesus and be united to his body, they must be

baptized; nay further, such as are sensibly affected with it as a seal of the Covenant of Grace, and so ground of faith, as a sacred qualification of approach to God, without which we may not come nigh unto him; and as the ordained Ark of Salvation; wherby we stand separated from the world unto so great advantages, he could not but set on it an high esteem, rejoycing in his Baptisme, blessing God for such distinguishing grace, and thankfully improve the same to his encouragement in, and ingagement unto duty. Let it therefore be your care with all diligence, to studie the nature of the Ordinance, and understand its use, vertue and value; that by ignorance you lose not its effects, or be led into erroneous notions, luke-warm affections

to, and prophane expressions towards so holy and necessary an Ordinance.

The second exhortation is, *To act our conversation, as sensible, that the body washed with pure water, must qualifie us with confidence in access to God.* Let your knowledge of the right use and nature of Baptisme appear in your lives and carriage under and towards so holy an Ordinance: Take heed of prophaning holy things, disesteeming high priviledges, and contemning special grounds of faith and priviledges of grace : and more particularly,

I. Direct. *Admit not men into communion with the Church in other Ordinances and acts of worship, that have not been baptized.* Let them enter at the right dore, that receive Gods

alms : Call not them the Lords people, who weare not the Lords livery: communicate not the priviledges of the Saints, with them who stand Aliens & Strangers to the Common-weakh of Israel: Let not them approach the presence of an holy God, who were never sanctified by the washing of water by the word : And in a word, take heed of running into the abomination of bringing into Gods Sanctuary, the unbaptized in flesh : Invert not Gods order and the Gospel method of approach to God. These might have seemed needless exhortations heretofore, but now doe not ; for that many in the midst of us doe not onely disown their own baptisme, but bring up their Issue unbaptized : And great is the present, and greater will be the future danger  
of

of admitting to sit at the Lords table , such as never were baptized. I could heartily wish we could keep a Register of the unbaptized, as we doe of the baptized : However, let the administrators of holy things, make it their first enquiry, *Were you baptized?* and take heed they pollute not Gods Sanctuarie, by admitting thereunto the men whose bodies were not washed with pure water. Be not deceived with a pretence of reall grace ; for grace must needs be pretended, where any of Gods Ordinances are despised and Christs prescribed order is neglected ; but if it were reall, it is not the Churches guide, who cannot know it : Outward qualifications must be their direction, and Gospel order in peoples approach to God , is their charge.

charge, and must be their care.

2. Direct. *Attend with reverence and affection, the administration of Baptisme unto others.* Turn not your backs on so holy an Ordinance and eminent action; but consider it is an act of worship, and Ordinance of God, as well as preaching or prayer; and our attendance on all acts of Religion, is duty; it is a solemn and sacred action, separating persons unto God, sanctifying them for God, stamping upon men holiness to the Lord, setting them as members of Church, the body of Christ, and solemnly dedicating them to the service of Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost. And doth not this call for the attendance of all the Lords people? Shali not the worth of union with Christs Church, and consecration to God,



God, be witnessed to be of weight by the reverent attendance of the assemblie? Are not all concerned in, and to be edified by the Ordinance, and shall they sleight it, and turn back on it? Consider the reproof of the guilt of such neglect: let it quicken you to duty: let your presence at, and reverence in the administration of Baptisme, bespeak your sense of its sacred nature and sanctifying use; making a Church Ordinance private by confining it to your houses, or running from its administration in the publique place, must needs be the result of low thoughts. Clandestine Baptism, is the cloud of Baptisme; and the rude out-running that Ordinance, runs it into contempt; be witnesses of their incorporation with whom you must live

in.

204      *The Vertue and*  
in communion in Gods Ord-  
inances.

3. Direction.      *Argue your*  
*Baptisme to your engagement to,*  
*and encouragement in drawing*  
*nigh to God.* Your bodies are  
washed with pure water, pro-  
voke your spirits to draw nigh  
in the assurance of faith : Con-  
sider that by your baptisme, you  
are singled out of the world, and  
set in a capacity of Salvation :  
You are placed in the Ark ;  
will you perish in the common  
deluge of mankind ? You are  
sanctified unto God by the  
washing of water ; will you  
stand at a distance from God, as  
strangers to him ? You are in  
the order of his own appoint-  
ment, suited for divine society ;  
will you live as without God,  
without hope in the world ? You  
are the sealed sonnes and sub-  
jects

jects of the covenant; and will you pass away your time as Bankrupts, that possess nothing? You have put on Jesus Christ his livery; will you not doe him homage with all cheerfull loyalty? You are entred into the household of Faith and Church of God; shall not their communion be to you comfortable? Is not Baptisme a ground of faith, and encouragement; why are you then so dispondent in appearing before God? Is it not your solemn Bond unto divine service; why are you then so dull and backward unto duty? Was your baptisme a *meer complement*, that you doe not minde it or make use of it now it is past? Is it not a *moral instrument* to be improved by meditation, affording matter of *counsel and comfort*? Nay is it  
not

not Gods Ordinance, a ground of faith, pledge of love, badge of relation, to be argued into the awe and encouragement of our access to God. Is not Baptisme an initiating seal, assuring us of initiating graces? hath it not planted us into the Olive, that we might extract sap and joyce to the bringing forth fruits of Righteousness? In a word, Baptisme is greatly advantageous to *hope and holyness*, if but duly improved by *acts of Faith*. We find no profit in it, because we look for none from it. If right assured, be never claimed, how shall it be possessed? If sin-mortifying engines be never used, sin must needs have dominion over the soul. I would to God, I cou'd but perswade Christians to sit down, and seriously contemplate their Baptisme

*Value of Baptisme. 207*

tisme in order to their holyness,  
and thus reflect it. *' I am bap-*  
*' tized ; Surely then I am under*  
*' some more than ordinary en-*  
*' gagement ; Thereby I was*  
*' washed from my old sins ; shall I*  
*' then live in them, or so far for-*  
*' get my self, as not to let vertue,*  
*' knowledge, temperance brother-*  
*' ly kindness, patience, godliness,*  
*' all the graces of God to abound in*  
*' me ? Is not Baptisme the dew*  
*' of Heaven, that waters the*  
*' Garden of God ? Hath it been*  
*' distilled on me, and shall I be*  
*' found idle and unfruitfull,*  
*' 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. I have*  
*' been baptized into the death of*  
*' Christ, buried with him in Bap-*  
*' tisme, planted into the simili-*  
*' tude of his death, that my old*  
*' man might be crucified, and*  
*' the body of sin destroyed, that*  
*' I should not serve sinne ; but*

' as he was raised up from the  
 ' dead, I should walk in newness  
 ' of life: and shall sin reign in my  
 ' mortal body, that I should obey  
 ' the lusts thereof; or shall I give  
 ' my members as weapons of un-  
 ' righteousness, unto sinne, Rom. 6.  
 ' I have by Baptisme, been conse-  
 ' crated unto God; and shall I  
 ' not come nigh him in duty? I am  
 ' incorporated into the Church;  
 ' ought I not then, to be conver-  
 ' sant in the assembly of the first  
 ' born? I have stricken Covenant  
 ' with God; will not my neg-  
 ' lect of duty, and course of im-  
 ' piety be charged on me, as the  
 ' breach of the oath of God? All  
 ' the promises of grace are to  
 ' me sealed; shall not I then  
 ' cleanse my self from all filthi-  
 ' ness of flesh and spirit, and per-  
 ' fect holiness? In a word, Bap-  
 ' tisme is the seal of the Cove-  
 ' nant

*Value of Baptisme. 209*

'nant set in my flesh, and the  
'causing me to see the evil of my  
'wayes and doings, and to be a-  
'shamed and forsake them; the  
'taking away the stony heart, and  
'giving an heart of flesh; the put-  
'ting Gods spirit within me, that  
'I may walk in his wayes, are the  
'promises of the Covenant; why  
'then doe not gracelesse I claim  
'them, and by prayer plead my  
'Baptisme for the obtainment  
'of them? For he is faithfull  
'that hath promised, but will not  
'perform, until they be asked in  
'faith. And as our Baptisme is  
thus a moral argument of holi-  
ness to our selves, it is the more  
helpfull hereunto, because it  
answers all temptations unto  
sin. When we are saluted with  
the pollutions that are in the  
world through lust, we may an-  
swer, *We are washed in pure wa-  
ter,*

ter, and may not be again defiled : The cogencie of custome must give place to the Covenant we have made in Baptisme : The violent temptations of Satan recoile upon the returns of Baptisme : I am baptized, silenceth all suggestiones to sinne : I am baptized into the Name of Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, is the only Spel (to speak with reverence) that charms the Devil. For it imports thus much : Shall the children of God converse with his enemies ? the confederates of God break his commands ? the separated out of the world, be subject to the Prince of the world ? Or doth malicious Satan thinke the sealed of the Lord, shall be so much fleighted by their Lord, as to be taken captive at his will ? Oh ! play the man in a rational management



*Value of Baptisme.* 211

agement of your Baptisme, it will much advance your Christianity all your dayes.

As Baptisme is *an help* to holinesse, so also *to hope*; to be improved by due acts of Faith, as it is an Ordinance of God, for our encouragement in access to him : many soules stand at a distance from divine Ordinances, or draw nigh with much trembling, which would be dispelled by due apprehensions of Baptisme : Let such therefore consider, that under the want of speciall, they ought to rejoyce in generall expressions of Gods love, and arguments of hope; and immediate assurances of divine favour are not to bee expected, whilest we have mediate Ordinances on which to rest our Faith. *Our Hope* must come into the Soule in the same way,

way, *with holynesse*, by a morall  
 improvement of Gods Grace,  
 in his Ordinances to us exten-  
 ded; let therefore the despon-  
 ding Christian, that trembles to  
 converse with Gods people, to  
 come nigh Gods table, or claim  
 any of Gods promises, sit down  
 and seriously discourse his Bap-  
 tisme. 'I am Baptized; Was  
 'this an emptie Ordinance?  
 'Shall my unbelieving heart i-  
 'magine any divine Institution  
 'to be emptie and in vain impo-  
 'ted? No, *All the Wayes of God*  
 '*are Truth*, hee never subjected  
 'Soules to any falacie, nor can  
 'doe: *Why then art thou so*  
 '*Jad Oh my Soule? Trust still in*  
 '*God, in him Will I hope*, for he  
 'hath established a Covenant of  
 'peace extended to my Parents,  
 'and through them to mee, and  
 'set the Seale thereof *Baptisme*

‘ in my flesh; and is not *Baptisme*  
‘ a pledg of his affection to mee,  
‘ a badge of my relation to him ?  
‘ Why then doe I say he knowes  
‘ mee not, or I belong not to  
‘ him ? Doe all the Sons of *A-*  
‘ *dam* weare this liverie ? Is  
‘ there a specialty in the applica-  
‘ tion of water; and hath it  
‘ extended to mee ? shall I say I  
‘ have received no favour pecu-  
‘ liar to the Lords people, and  
‘ distinct from the mass of man-  
‘ kinde ? Nay, I am by Baptisme  
‘ a matriculated Disciple in  
‘ Christ his Schole, an incorpo-  
‘ rated Member of the household  
‘ of Faith ? Why then doe I  
‘ feare to feede on childrens  
‘ Bread ? and to use those pri-  
‘ viledges that doe belong to the  
‘ Citizens of the *new-Jeru-*  
‘ *salem* ? Why am I as an alien  
‘ and stranger from the Com-  
‘ mon-

‘monwealth of *Israel*? I have  
‘by Baptisme put on *Jesus*  
‘*Christ*, and shall I feare to  
‘come before the Father? is  
‘not hee his beloved Sonne in  
‘whom hee is well pleased? Is  
‘not Baptisme a Seale of Gods  
‘Covenant? Why then doe I  
‘not claime the promises?  
‘What though I see not Gods  
‘privie Seale, *the Spirit of*  
‘*adoption*, is the broad seal of the  
‘Covenant of no force and va-  
‘lue; doth it in vain bear on it  
‘divine authority? why then is  
‘it called the *Ark of Salvation*?  
‘why hath God said, he that be-  
‘leeveth and is baptized, shall be  
‘*saved*? Shall I lose my Salva-  
‘tion, for not joyning faith to  
‘my baptisme? What though I  
‘finde many rude Christians and  
‘prophane persons in the  
‘Church, claiming priviledge  
‘by

‘ by their Baptisme ; can I deny  
‘ in some things their claim to  
‘ be good, though they be wick-  
‘ ed? And wherein it is not good  
‘ to them, breaking the Cove-  
‘ nant, may it not be good to  
‘ me, poor me, that desire to  
‘ keep the Covenant of my  
‘ God? In a word, hath not  
‘ God sanctified me to himself,  
‘ by the washing of water ; and  
‘ doth he call men to draw nigh  
‘ to him in assurance of faith,  
‘ having the body washed with  
‘ pure water, and shall I be dis-  
‘ mayed in access to him? Oh!  
‘ the wickedness of my *doubting*,  
‘ that doth spring from igno-  
‘ rance of Gods holy O *vinan-*  
‘ ces, the sin of my *despondencie*,  
‘ that deters me from duty, and  
‘ exposeth my baptisme to con-  
‘ tempt: I will sure cast off this  
‘ estate, and hence forward con-  
‘ tinue

'tinue with the Church in the  
 'Word, breaking of bread, and  
 'Prayer, and use of all other  
 'priviledges of grace, and com-  
 'posedly prize the benefit of  
 'Ordinances, that by rational  
 'acts of faith in them, I may at  
 'length arrive at the fulness of  
 'assurance. Thus then Chri-  
 stians argue to your selves, the  
 duty and dignity of your Bap-  
 tisme, enjoy with comfort the  
 priviledges thereby conferred:  
 Know and approve your selves  
 as baptized: and thereby

*Singled out of the world by*  
 Baptisme, and set in a capacity  
 of Salvation, as was Noahs fami-  
 ly in the Arke, 1 Pet. 3. 21.

*Sanctified unto God, Baptisme*  
 being the solempne form of con-  
 secration, Ephes. 5. 26.

*Sons and Subjects of the Co-*  
 venant, invested with Christ, in-  
 corporated

corporated into his Church, the seal of which is in your fleshly Baptisme.

*Suited for divine society*, by the expiation of guilt, extirpation of sins power, and exact confederation with God; all which the Scriptures note, to be the effects of Baptisme, or the washing of the body with pure water.

In the apprehension and argumentation of these, privileges, let me guide your judgements by propounding to your consideration, these several rules.

1. Rule. *Salvation and sanctification, and the like privileges, are naturally argued from Baptisme, as it is an Ordinance of God ordained to that end.* Therefore the effects are to it attributed: It in all things necessary

L                      bears

bears an analogie with Circumcision, and propounds moral considerations to that end, to the reasonable soul of man, to be argued by contemplative acts of faith.

2. Rule. *All that will be sanctified, saved, and enjoy the before noted priviledges, must be baptized.* All that will in an ordinary way possess them (for extraordinary providences are beyond the reach of our debate) must be baptized : not only on the necessity of a command from God, but the nature of the Ordinance, being the means appointed rightly constituted, and readily conclusive to such an end : So that none unbaptized, can on any ground expect to enjoy, nor may warrantably be admitted to the priviledges of a sanctified and saved people of the Lord.

3. Rule.



3. Rule. *Some baptized, enjoy these priviledges of salvation, sanctification, and the like, visibly and symbolically; others, really sincerely, and savingly. Some are seemingly saved and sanctified in the sight of men and esteem of the Church: These enjoy the outward Ordinance only, and that is the guide and ground of humane censure, and the judgement of the Church: Hence the term Saint, Believer, Disciple, Brother, is in Scripture given, and must be by the Church yeilded to hypocrites; yea, to visible prophane persons, but baptized: but others are sincerely and savingly possessed of these priviledges, not only in the judgement of the Church, but by the testimonie of their own conscience and spirit of adoption. These enjoy not only the out-*

ward signe, but also the inward grace of Baptisme; have not only the body washed with pure water, but also the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. The outward Ordinance and inward grace are sometimes divided, according to the visible and invisible ministration of the Covenant. Baptisme is to all, the same in its nature, but not in its effects: it is in it self *efficacious* to all, but in some, not meeting with due capacity, acts of faith, to improve it, it becomes *not effectual*. Many baptized, and by the Church called heirs of Glorie, lose their hopes, holiness, and heaven it self; not because Baptisme did not seal it, and confer a ground or right, but because the soul acted not faith in the right unto the claim of what was conferred: None so deservedly

deservedly lose their inheritance as those who improve not their sealed evidence to a due claim. Take heed lest there be among you a *prophane Esau*, heir of his fathers blessing, who for a *mess of pottage* sold his birthright. Men in the Church contented with Creature-comforts, claim not the priviledges of the Covenant conferred by their Baptisme, and so lose their birth-right.

4. Rule. *The outward priviledges of Baptisme enjoyed visibly and in the judgement of the Church, may be forfeited, and by the censures of the Church taken away.* - A brother may be made as a *Publicane and Heathen*; a member of Christs body may be cut off; and a servant of God may be delivered unto Satan; the Citizens of *Jerusalem* may be disfranchised: private persons

may not at pleasure disown baptized souls; but the publique censure of the Church, if unworthy their received Baptisme, may discharge them Church communion, and divest them of salvation, sanctification, interest in the Covenant, which *clave non errant*. the Church: not Erring is ratified in Heaven as well as in the Church visible upon earth.

5. Rule. *Salvation, sanctification, and the priviledges of the Covenant, may by Baptisme be conferred on them who are not sensible of the Ordinance, or in a present capacity of using them.* Right may be formally conferred, where it is not presently acted. The King may be crowned in the cradle, the crown be set on his head, as a token of right, before his hand can hold the Scepter. Present incapacity  
of

of use is no barre to the laying the foundation of a future claim. Many men at years, must review the Decrees concerning their estates, which were sealed in Infancie. Infants may have their Baptisme as soon as born, whereby they must claim the Covenant, when they come to years of capacity.

6. Rule. *The baptized, not arguing joy and duty from their Baptisme, doe sinne against the nature of the Ordinance : and either disown its institution to that end, or deny its efficacie thereunto, and disesteem its specialty, as related to the Covenant and people of God. Therefore deliver we our selves from sin, and let us carefully improve our Baptisme, as the qualification that fits us for a confidence in approach to God.*

The fourth exhortation, is to Parents, Christian Parents. *With ardent care and affection, present your Infants unto Baptisme, and instruct them in their baptismal priviledge.* Your children *may, nay must*, by your care, *come nigh to God.* Let them then be consecrated; they are, as your natural issue, an holy seed begotten to the Lord: Holy in the esteem of the Church, and extent of the Covenant; partakers of the fatness of the Olives; Heirs of the promise of Remission and Salvation; Children of the Covenant; bearing Christ his Name, as his Disciples to be received, not offended, as we have before proved. And shall not they come nigh to God, enter into his Sanctuary, be joyned to the assemblies of his people? Hath not Christ said to the rebukers

bukers of such approach, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for such are of the kingdome of heaven,* and capable of my blessing ? and shall not then Infants be admitted members of Christ his body, and have the seal of the Covenant set in their flesh, and holiness stamped on them ? Shall they not be consecrated to the Lord : hath not the Lord appointed the same sanctifying Ordinance to root and branches ; and will you not with care and affection pursue it ? Shall God give your children Covenant interest, and shall not your paternal care provide for the confirmation of it, by the seal of which they are capable ? Would you not affectionately contend for their interest in a *worldly estate* ; neglect it not in

*an heavenly* : but when God gives you children, be carefull with all convenient speed, to give them back again to God : When you have brought forth heirs of the Covenant, with due reverence bring them to Gods Church, to be inrolled, and have their interest sealed by Baptisme. Provoke not God to meet with you, as with *Moses* , for your neglect of sanctifying your seed by his holy Ordinances. Let not your children have cause to curse and complain of your neglect of their baptisme. Let not your affection to your Infants baptisme be cooled, or care for it be checked by the foolish exceptions of their adversaries, whilest you see their interest is cleer. What if it be objected, that all the arguments for their Baptisme is by way of inference  
and



and consequence: Is not Scripture consequence Gods word, binding conscience, produced by our Saviour as a ground of faith, to prove the Resurrection and his own sufferings? Is it a sufficient warrant of womens receiving the Lords Supper, and will it not prove Infants right to Baptisme? and direct the subjects to whom a sacred Ordinance must be applied? I have before evidenced Infants right to Baptisme, and given sufficient answer to the objections urged against it: I would now engage you Parents to make conscience of your duty to baptize your children. Contract not on your selves the guilt of the sacrilege before noted; and the more to encourage you hereunto, let me shew you some of those many advantages that attend.

tend the *infant season of Baptism*, wherein it is to be preferred before *baptisme at grown years*. Reverend Mr. *Forde*, in his practical use of Infant-Baptisme, hath very affectionately enforced this argument, and shewed many benefits. I refer you seriously to read them : And for your present help, let me wish you to consider, that Infant Baptisme confers on us these several priviledges, which adult Baptisme leaves us without.

1. Infant Baptisme expresseth/signature.

2. Explaineth the benefit of Relation, and the method of the Covenant, and eminently dignifyeth the children of such parents.

3. Enlargeth and establisheth the Church.

4. Exciteth Repentance.

5. Enforceth

5. Enforceth Faith.
6. Engageth duty.
7. Encourageth under death.

None of these doe so naturally flow from the baptisme of men of grown yeeies, as wee shall plainly see by a particular consideration of them.

The first benefit by Infant-Baptisme is, That it *expresseth the sin of nature, and engageth against it:* Baptisme doth it self declare sinne to bee *defiling*, but the *spreading* propertie thereof is evidenced by *Infant-Baptisme*. They are *washed*, must needs witness they are *uncleane*; but *their early Baptisme*, must needs note their uncleannesse is in *their nature*, not in their persons; for poor Babes, they have acted neyther good nor evill: That Babes must beare the paine of Circumcision bespeaks a foreskin upon their heart,

heart, that makes them prophane to God. The Baptisme of men at yeeres, doth indeed minde them that they are filthy, but that is a filthiness of their person, evidencing that they having committed many actual corruptions, that appears to them : but that they are transgressors from the womb, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, of a prophane lump, and polluted in their very being ; it no way at all convinceth, no, that is the language of the baptized before actuall sin. The baptisme and burial of our babes, hath ever been in the Church of God, two unanswerable arguments against the Pelagian fancie, that *children have no imbred corruption, but sin by imitation* : If we give away the first, it is just God should take away the second, by giving us  
barren

barren wombs. Infants Baptisme was urged by *Austin* against *Pelagius*, to the puzzling of him in his denial of original sinne: yet he never denied them to be baptized, which had been a ready answer; nor was he ever able to withstand the consequence: For if baptized before polluted in person, they must needs be unclean in nature; before actual sin pass from them, original sin must needs be upon them, before they are capable of any imitation, then they must needs be the subjects of imbred corruption: For Baptisme cannot be denied to be Gods Ordinance of Remission and Regeneration; and further, this evidence of hereditarie sin must needs engage hereditarie enmity, and so irreconcilable hatred, much more violent and implacable, than

heart, that makes them prophane to God. The Baptisme of men at yeeres, doth indeed minde them that they are filthy, but that is a filthiness of their person, evidencing that they having committed many actual corruptions, that appears to them : but that they are transgressors from the womb, conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, of a prophane lump, and polluted in their very being ; it no way at all convinceth, no, that is the language of the baptized before actuall sin. The baptisme and burial of our babes, hath ever been in the Church of God, two unanswerable arguments against the Pelagian fancie, that *children have no imbred corruption, but sin by imitation* : If we give away the first, it is just God should take away the second, by giving us  
barren

barren wombs. Infants Baptisme was urged by *Austin* against *Pelagius*, to the puzzling of him in his denial of original sinne: yet he never denyed them to be baptiz'd, which had been a ready answer; nor was he ever able to withstand the consequence: For if baptized before polluted in person, they must needs be unclean in nature; before actual sin pass from them, original sin must needs be upon them, before they are capable of any imitation, then they must needs be the subjects of imbred corruption: For Baptisme cannot be denyed to be Gods Ordinance of Remission and Regeneration; and further, this evidence of hereditarie sin must needs engage hereditarie enmity, and so irreconcilable hatred, much more violent and implacable, than

than that which is personal, being inforced by the antiquity of the quarrel : it runs in a blood, and passeth from parents to children. I have observed a great aptitude in the enemies of Infants Baptisme, to embrace the Arminian fancies, and deny all original sinne : And it is no marvel, whilst their principles are so neer of kin ; one Error will easily ingender another. As ever you will make visible the sin of nature, baptize your babes before they be stained with actual guilt.

The second Benefit of Infant Baptisme is, That it *explaineth the benefit of Relation and the method of transmitting the Covenant of Grace*. Baptisme, as a seal of the Covenant, sheweth interest in the Covenant, and the benefit of personall qualification

on



on, that fits for it ; but it is the Infant season, that sheweth that God hath wisely ordered *Grace to run in natures channel*, and parental relation, under such a qualification *as belceving*, to engender a propriety to Baptisme. He that first receives the Patent of honour, can discern no benefit of relation, save what is future ; but if his Patent be only personal, he seeth none at all : but hereditarie honours are demonstrations of relation and its advantage ; hereby a man knows what his benefit is, in being *the childe of a Baron or Earle*, rather than of a *common Knight or Gentleman*. Baptisme applied to men of years, doth indeed demonstrate a Covenant of Grace granted on good behaviour, unto every individual person ; but wholly obliterate the *seeds interest*.

terest and extent of the Covenant unto *natural Issue*, in order to their good behaviour. It declareth expressly, that as to the specialtie of Gods Grace, *relation to beleiving Parents*, is no privilege: As good be the childe of *Ammon*, as of *Abraham*; of a Pagan, as a Christian: which is cleerly contrarie to the tenure of the Covenant, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed: The promise is to you and your children*: and the ground of applying the initiating seal, is relation to such Parents. Therefore every man-child at eight dayes old, shall be circumcised, that thereby it may appear, the order of my Covenant is, to Parents beleiving and their seed, and the benefit of relation to such Children, shall be, that *I will be their God*. Relation to the Olive,

*Value of Baptisme.* 235

is the reason of the branches fatness: The Jews relation to their pious progenitors, is the only remaining hope of their conversion, *They are beloved of God, according to election, for the fathers sake, Rom. 11. 28.* If we will maintain the knowledge of relative advantages in the Covenant of Grace, carefully baptize we our Babes in their infancy, as the plainest comment thereon: so when they shall consider themselves to have been sealed and sanctified to God, before they had in themselves the least of personal qualification, they will bless God for the Covenant of their fathers, and the extent of it to the seed of believers, and giving them to be born of such favorites to heaven. The great assertors of the Baptisme of grown persons, to defend their notion,

notion, doe in the ministration of Grace, darken all relation, and disfranchise all Posterity, interpreting the cleer text of Scripture, *The promise is to you and your children*, by a personal qualification, when *God shall call them*; as if the Holy Ghost had spoken nonsense, and used a term of relation in vain, and to no purpose: But certainly when God established a Covenant of Grace, he did not invert nature's course, but provided relation to derive the priviledges thereof in his Church, as well as other advantages in the world; nor did he in the least, intend Religion to be an abridgement of parental right, and power of dedication of their seed to the service of their God, as well as designation to any worldly trade: and therefore he appointed a seal of his

his Covenant and sacred Bond  
to his own service, whereby sub-  
jects meerly passive (as was be-  
fore noted) might be at the plea-  
sure of Parents to him present-  
ed. And hereof Infant-Bap-  
tisme, is the only visible evidence  
in the whole world : Root and  
branches, Parents and Children,  
are alwaies homogeneous : Na-  
ture makes all relations to be of  
the same kinde ; and Grace, not  
inverting Natures order, will  
have the children, *by the dignity*  
*of a sacred Ordinance, to be de-*  
*clared of the holy kinde,* with their  
Parents ; and by this religious  
badge of Baptisme, be distingui-  
shed from other Children of  
Turks, Jews, and Pagans, who  
like their Parents, remain pro-  
phane and estranged unto God.  
And thus Infant-Baptisme, doth  
not only evidence relation and  
its

238 *The Vertue and*

its benefit, the method and order of the Covenant to men within, but also to men without the Church, that it may be to them an encouragement, to lay hold on the Covenant of God, for that they doe not only provide for their own personal term, but see Grace also extended to their issue, on the very ground of relation natural unto them, under a Christian qualification. And this is especially profitable to the Jew, who having had the Covenant of God to themselves and seed natural, as their seed, and that witnessed by the initiating seal of Circumcision, set in the flesh of their children, must needs stumble at the new Covenant, if it exclude their issue, as hath been before noted : So that the Infant-Baptisme, so cleerly witnessing the  
order

order of the Covenant and benefit of relation to beleeving Parents, to the comfort of men within the Church, and encouragement of men without the Church, it must needs be more profitable than the Baptisme at grown years, which curtails the Covenant, cuts off Posterity, casts out of the Church, all relation natural, and maketh all ministrations of Grace to be meerly personal.

The third benefit of Infant Baptisme is, That it *enlargeth the bounds, and establissheth the being of the Church of God*; but the baptisme of grown men doth much confine the borders, and hazard the being of the Church. Infant Baptisme doth enlarge the Church by the spreading of it through whole Families, Countries and Nations;

ons; persons are private and perishing. but posterity is publique and flourishing; holy seede is the Churches nurserie, whilest grown trees are fading; Lambs are the increase of Christs Fold, when old sheep are few and dying, and succession is the surest title and strongest ground of claime: when from generation to generation the Church of God is continued in a constant Race, from Father to Son, it is much established against hellish opposition. Nature hath made all living Crestures *seminall* that they might multiply and continue: the course of providence is the same to the Church that it is to the World: certainly the only wise God well knew the best way to enlarge and establish his owne kingdome upon Earth; and hee, though

he



hee founded his Church in an old stock, yet order'd the spreading of it by naturall branches, and preservation of it by posteritie : The method of God must needs bee the same in the maintenance of his Church under the new , as it was under the old Testament , and hee that takes up his Church from one Nation, on designe to extend it through all the nations of the World , would never plant it only in personall perishing plants, but provide for their scattering an holy-seede for its increase and<sup>o</sup> succession. The promise of the Churches increase in Gospell times, is noted to be by *Children* ; the promise is expresse, *I will lift up my Standard to the Gentiles, and they shall bring thy sonnes in their armes, and thy daughters on their*  
M *shoulders,*

*shoulders, Isa. 49. 22.* Our own observation must needs witnesse the bounds of the Church is much enlarged by *Infant Baptisme*; more are ingaged to God by an early incorporation to his Church, then their owne personall choice, for where wee see one man take up Christianity so much as to the profession of it, on terms of choyce, wee see hundreds engaged therein by parental profession, and baptismall obligation in their infancy; if an essay hereof were made in *America*, how small would bee the number of them that should own God and Christ, by being baptized in grown yeeres, and how numerous would they bee, by a timely dedication to God, and incorporation to the Church by *Infant Baptisme*? And again,  
how

*Value of Baptisme.* 243

how many generations, each after other, hath succeeded in the Churches of God in our Nation; but how soon will they be extinct, this Orchard be overspread with the weeds of Atheisme and Heathenisme, if Anabaptists Parents doe proceede to breake off their branches from the Olive, and the line of the Covenant from their Posteritie?

The fourth benefit of Infant Baptisme, *It exciteth Repentance.* Baptisme in it selfe is hereunto an argument, but it is more enforced from the season of infancy than grown age; humiliati-  
on for past guilt, and future caution against sin are much enforced by the season of our Baptisme, and that by pointing out unto us the inclination of our nature, and the kindnesse of our God, both which, meeting with

an ingenuous spirit, are very moving and melting considerations; That wee are washed in water, doth witnesse wee are unclean; but in that we are washed in this Infant season, before stained with the least actual sin and personal corruption, must needs witness, that *in the day of our nativity our father was an Amorite, our mother an Hittite: We were polluted in our blood, our navel not cut; we were not washed, nor salted; no eye pitied us, but we were cast out to the loathing of our persons.* If Baptisme be an Ordinance of Remission and Regeneration, it must needs remember its infant subjects, that in their nature there is *guilt* to be bewailed and pardoned, a *foreskin* to be violently cut off; a *pravity* unto evil, to be slain; an *old man*, to be crucified with Christ;

*Value of Baptisme.* 245

Christ; a corrupt nature, to be watched against with all care and caution, and that not acquired by any personal act or custom of our own, as Baptisme at age imports; but (the more cutting it is to consider) it is imbred in nature, hereditarie to our being. & therefore will more easily act in us, more closely adhere to us, and doth call for more care to keep it under: true repentance alwayes reflects on the root of sin, *in iniquity was I conceived, and in sin did my mother bring me forth*, is the first complaint of pensive David, and hereunto Infant-Baptisme doth plainly point us.

This season of our Baptisme, doth not only acquaint us with our own vile nature, but also affect us with Gods kindness, that will melt the ingenuous soul in-

to mourning and much care, not to offend ; for the season of our Baptisme doth shew us *Gods love to us*, as he was the God of *our fathers* and the God of *our youth*, and both of them are exceeding aggravations of guilt. God often doth charge the sin of *Israel* under the notion of *forsaking the God of their fathers*, and the pious in Scripture, did much enforce their humiliation, by the kindnesse God did shew *their fathers* : And if we consider our selves sealed in infancie by Baptisme, we must needs see God was the God of our fathers, and struck Covenant with them, and was unto them gracious, otherwise we could not have been owned, as begotten to the Lord, and to be baptized ; and therefore the sins we commit, is against our fathers, friend,

friend, and God; nay they are against the *God of our youth*, that *owned us* in the day of our nativity, and in the loathing of our persons, and said unto us, Live; that took us as his own, sware unto us, and entred into Covenant with us in our very cradle, when we could not choose for our selves, and set the seale of his Covenant in our flesh, and placed us on the knees of his Church, brought us up at his own costs, and nourished us by his Ordinances, and hath been our God all our dayes. Oh! what aggravations of sinne doth this kindness of God afford? How may the Ministers of God speak bitter things against them that daily break the Covenant of their youth, and deal unfaithfully with the God of their fathers? Me thinks I should heare some

pensive soul sitting on its stool  
of repentance, thus soaking its  
hard heart in its Infant-bap-  
tisme, by such serious contem-  
plations as these. *' I am bapti-*  
*' zed: then surely unclean guilt is*  
*' on my soul; the body of corrup-*  
*' tion possesseth me ; if I be not*  
*' pardoned, I perish : If this old*  
*' man be not buried with Christ*  
*' in Baptisme, I am undone.*  
*' Must not the water of my bap-*  
*' tisme, set the pump of my dry*  
*' heart on running tears of*  
*' contrition for this defiled e-*  
*' state of my person : of my per-*  
*' son ; that is not all ; I was bap-*  
*' tized in infancie, before I was*  
*' in the least capable of staining*  
*' my person. Oh wretched man !*  
*' my very nature is defiled : how*  
*' can I dream of drawing nigh*  
*' to God, that am the puddled*  
*' stream of a polluted fountain ?*  
*' Sinne*



‘Sinne is my natural temper,  
‘and guilt the very image of my  
‘father : *In iniquity I was con-*  
‘*ceived, and in sinne brought*  
‘*forth*, how shall I be purged  
‘from this natural blemish, or  
‘withstand this imbred corrup-  
‘tion ? How am I necessitated  
‘to live in sinne, for that it is  
‘naturalized to my very being ?  
‘How easily must I needs be  
‘drawn to sinfull action, whose  
‘very nature is *sinfull corrupti-*  
‘*on* ? If ever I obtain pardon  
‘for, or power over my sinne, it  
‘must needs be an act of especial  
‘Grace, the benefit of a pecu-  
‘liar Covenant : Sure I am, I  
‘can never sufficiently lament  
‘this sad estate of my nature.  
‘Many are the sinfull actions  
‘which daily flow from this bit-  
‘ter root, and they sink my soul  
‘into the depth of sorrows,

‘ when I seriously consider my  
‘ self baptized : For hereby I  
‘ see God, the God of my fa-  
‘ thers, and the God of my  
‘ youth, to have been the object  
‘ of my offences, *against thee, thee*  
‘ *only have I offended*; thee, the  
‘ God of my father, to whom  
‘ thou shewedst favour, and  
‘ called him out of darkness into  
‘ thy marvellous light, with  
‘ whom thou didst establish thy  
‘ Covenant of Grace, and didst  
‘ extend it to his seed; and  
‘ madest me, *miserable* me, par-  
‘ takers of it, and so becamest my  
‘ God from my very being; thou  
‘ sawest me in the day of my na-  
‘ tivity; when I lay in my blood  
‘ in the loathing of my person,  
‘ thy eye pitied me, thou said’st  
‘ unto me, Live; thou spakest  
‘ kindly unto me, swarest to me,  
‘ and entred’st into Covenant  
‘ with

*Value of Baptisme.* 251

‘ with me, and madest me thine  
‘ own; layedst me in the lap of  
‘ thy Church, nourishedst me by  
‘ thine Ordinances : Thou by  
‘ timely engaging me to thy self,  
‘ did’st prevent my wicked choice  
‘ and Satan his malicious pur-  
‘ pose of possessing me as a vas-  
‘ sal of his kingdome; all my  
‘ dayes thou hast done me good,  
‘ yet *wretched I*, have sinned a-  
‘ gainst such a God; *ungratefull*  
‘ *I*, have been ready to forsake  
‘ thee my God, and my fathers  
‘ God, and have dealt faislly in  
‘ thy Covenant. It might be just  
‘ with thee, to deal with me as  
‘ *I have dealt with thee, when I*  
‘ *despised the oath in breaking the*  
‘ *Covenant*; but in thy mercy,  
‘ Lord, I pray thee, *Remember*  
‘ *thy Covenant thou madest to me*  
‘ *in the dayes of my youth, and e-*  
‘ *stablish it for an everlasting*  
‘ *Cove-*

‘ Covenant, that *I may know the*  
‘ *Lord*, that I may remember  
‘ and be ashamed, and never o-  
‘ pen my mouth any more, be-  
‘ cause of my shame, when thou  
‘ art pacified towards me, for all  
‘ that I have done against the  
‘ God of my father, and the  
‘ God of my youth : Now will  
‘ I live in loyalty to so good a  
‘ God, if thou wilt give me to  
‘ be sanctified by the blood of  
‘ sprinkling, and my old man to  
‘ be crucified by Baptisme, which  
‘ by thy Grace shall be the awe  
‘ of my soul and answer of my  
‘ heart unto every temptation  
‘ to sin against thee.

This benefit cannot be effect-  
ed by adult Baptisme, which af-  
fords no such matter of medi-  
tation, apprehending the dispen-  
sations of God to be only per-  
sonal, and therefore to be  
personally

personally improved.

The fifth Benefit of Infant-Baptisme is, that it *enforceth faith towards God*. Baptisme, as a seal of the promise, pledge of love, and sanctifying O. dinance of God, is a ground of faith pleadable in prayer by all its subjects, but receiveth not a little force from the season of its application in infancie; whilest it self witnesseth the Covenant it seals, the season of its use witnesseth the extent of the Covenant to *beleevers and their seed*, and creates a ground, on which to claim protection, as well by *early seizure, as covenant propriety*, not to note how all the Graces of God, in order to salvation and good things of this life, even *all things pertaining to life and godliness*, are assured to the soul by Baptisme, as the seal of  
the

the Covenant. The Parent can  
with faith thus plead from the  
season. 'Lord, my childe is  
' thine in Covenant, to thee be-  
' gotten, to thee dedicated, by thy  
' seal on his flesh: Oh ! wilt thou  
' own him : Remember him ;  
' take care of him ; establish thy  
' Covenant with him ; let all  
' the graces of thy promise be  
' performed to him ; let not Sa-  
' tan seduce him from thy ser-  
' vice, to which he is so soon seal-  
' ed. How much doe I owe to  
' thee, that makest Grace to run  
' through Natures channel, *my*  
' *loins* ? Lord, let him in time  
' know, and have faith to claim  
' his interest : keep him from the  
' property of prophane *Eſau*,  
' that he despise not his birth-  
' right in thy Covenant, which  
' thou haſt sealed to him in the  
' ſight of thy people, by his bap-  
' tiſme.

'tisme. And as the Parent so  
the person baptized, acting faith  
in the Ordinance, doth thus en-  
force it from his Infant season  
of enjoyment of it. ' God is a  
' gracious God, in calling my  
' parents; he had respect unto my  
' good, before I had a being; he  
' graciously established w<sup>th</sup> them  
' a Covenant, which he extended  
' to their seed; I no sooner  
' sprang from the womb, but he  
' owned me as his own, and cal-  
' led me by his name, and set the  
' seal of his Covenant in my  
' flesh: as studious to forestall  
' the choice of my corrupt will  
' (*which would never have chosen*  
' *him*) he challenged me, and  
' caused me to be dedicated to  
' his service, as sensible of Satans  
' malice; he made a nearly sei-  
' zure of me, and set his mark  
' upon me, and before there was  
' in

‘ in me the least of act or quali-  
‘ fication ; he sanctified me to  
‘ himself by the washing of wa-  
‘ ter. What ever doubts may  
‘ deter me , I will now draw  
‘ nigh unto him, and depend up-  
‘ on him ; for he that was so  
‘ soon gracious in extending and  
‘ sealing to me the Covenant,  
‘ will faithfully perform it : My  
‘ condemnation will be most  
‘ just, if I, having such grounds  
‘ of faith, should be cut off by  
‘ reason of unbelief : now I will  
‘ walk before , and wait upon  
‘ him ; for he will not now for-  
‘ sake me, or suffer Satan to re-  
‘ possess me, and take me out of  
‘ his house and family.

. The sixth Benefit of Infant-  
Baptisme is, That it engageth  
*more to duty*, than adult Bap-  
tisme. Herein it is of use to the  
*Parent and baptized child*. How  
much



much of argument doth Infant-Baptisme press upon *the Parent*, to the due instruction and education of his baptized child. Not to speak any thing of the benefit of catechising it self, the Parent hath reason to refl. At the Baptisme of his child in its infant estate, to convince him, ' That if ' God hath been so gracious to ' extend a Covenant of Salvati- ' on to his seed ; he must have so ' much grace as to make them ' know Gods goodness, and un- ' derstand the extent of the Co- ' venant : If God hath caused ' their loins to convey-grace as ' well as sinne, their care must be ' that the grace of God be not ' received in vain. The childs ig- ' norance of interest in con- ' ceded honours and priviledges, ' is the baseness of education, and ' blot of natural affection : If by ' their

‘ their Parental power they have  
‘ dedicated them to Father, Son,  
‘ and holy Ghost, it is their part  
‘ to make them know to what  
‘ they are devoted. And as it  
bindes the Parents to the duty  
of education, so the child to  
careful observation: Early adop-  
tion is the greatest argument of  
filial observation that can be: the  
child taken off the Stall, is more  
bound to the will of Parents,  
than the man at years adopted to  
inherit; the one is the object of  
more pitie, subject of more care,  
cost and charge, but of lesse ser-  
vice and obedience; therefore  
bound more to duty than the o-  
ther. Infant-Baptism giveth cause  
to sing with Israel, *He is our God  
and our fathers God, We will exalt  
him, Exod. 15. 2.* and with David  
*I am thy servant, the son of thy  
handmaid; I will offer sacrifice,*  
and

*Value of Baptisme.* 259

and call upon thy name, *Psal.* 116.  
16.17. We must not think as  
heirs of dignity to wear Gods  
livery in our cradles, but must  
know, it makes us also heirs of  
duty, to yeeld loyalty to him all  
our dayes. Parental dedication  
to God, layeth on us the duty of  
observation: Shall Parents pro-  
claim dayes of *purim* to be ob-  
served in all generations, and po-  
sterity dare to pretermitt them?  
Whether we consider Gods pi-  
tie or our Parents power spark-  
ling in our Infant-Baptism, both  
impose on us duty; & the nature  
of our Baptism (the effect of both)  
binds us to fight at Gods com-  
mand under Christ his Banner a-  
gainst every iniquity and vice, to  
the discharge of every duty of  
Religion; but neither faith nor  
obedience can be so enforced by  
the Baptisme of grown persons,  
which

which deny relations natural to be of any use in things of Salvation, and doth greatly darken the method and order of the Covenant of Grace and Salvation.

The seventh and last Benefit of Infant-Baptisme is, That it *encourageth under death*; and that either the *Child or Parents*. We read in primitive times of Infant Martyrs, certainly they were thereunto prepared by a knowledge of their interest in the Covenant. In vain should the miserable mother encourage the scourged thirsty child, to remember *the cup of which Isaac drank*, and patiently to bear its present torments, for that it should be *shortly crowned with eternal glory*, if the child at eight years of age had not understood the Covenant of God, and been catechised in its baptism. Our Anabaptists will

will never afford us *babie Mar-*  
*tirs*, that will not allow us *babie*  
*Christians*. And as for Parents, if  
their childrens interest in the Co-  
venant and right to Baptisme, doe  
not support them under the death  
of their babes, I (a parent of dead  
children) doe demand, what can?  
That they are by nature *children of*  
*wrath*, must not be denyed; that  
they fall into a *limbus Infan-*  
*tum*, must be denyed by all that  
abhor Poperie: that they are saved  
there remains no hope, whilest we  
see them out of the Ark of salva-  
tion. What unusual way the Ana-  
baptists run upon for their own  
comfort, they have not yet decla-  
red, nor will Scripture warrant a-  
ny. Were it not for Infants interest  
in the Covenant, sealed in their  
Baptism, I should mourn over my  
dead children, as without hope.

You see now, that there is not  
only warrant in Scripture for the  
Baptisme of your Infants, but  
there is much of profit by it.  
Whilest others are beating the  
controvesie,

controversie, doe you study the practice of Infant-Baptisme. Let not seducers beguile your simple souls, by pretending Infant-Baptisme is *unlawfull*, because *unusefull* : But seeing there is so much profit in the Ordinance, and so much in the season of its application, prize it, pursue it, and preserve it to the Church : Let your children be *baptized* in their Infancie, and *catechised* according to their growing capacitie, that through ignorance they may not throw away their birth-right, but may duly know the duty and dignity thereof, and demean themselves as baptized souls.

The fifth and last exhortation is to Church-gathering saints, *To admit the baptized into the approaches to God, in the assemblies of his people.* Make no bar of division to such as weare the badge of union. If Baptisme doe incorporate into the Church, and consecrate unto God, why doe you deny the relation of the baptized, or their fitness

ness for divine service? either deny Baptisme to be the dore of admission into the Church of Christ, or throw down your *Church Covenant agreement or experiences of graces*, as to entrance into a Church state. Deny Baptisme to be the Church constituting Bond, or talk not of gathering Churches from among baptized souls: Affect not to your selves the terms and titles of *saints, brethren, beleevers, Church*, and the like, whilst those you despise have as good, nay (by reason of your sinfull schisme) a better title thereunto than your selves. If Baptisme be the ground of confidence in access to God, who are you that make it void? Is not the straitning of the Church, dore as dangerous as setting it wide open? Will it not be equally provoking to God to let *doggs* into his house, and to *keep children out*; to pollute his *holy things* by the unbaptized, and bar the baptized from *his worship*? If men baptized walk disorderly, endeavor by discipline to reduce them; deny

deny not their interest : drive them not from God: make it not your designe to paganize the Christians among whom you dwell, that some few of them may be brought into your Church-way. Weigh well the nature of Baptism, if it do not charge your way with wickedness, I know not how to judge. If Baptism rightly apprehended, be not the engine to batter Independencie, I dare renounce my skil in militaries. Let not God say, draw neer in full assurance, having your bodies washed with pure water ; and you say to your baptized Brethren, stand thou further from me, I am holier than thou.

Thus then I have noted to you the nature of Baptisme, the outward Ordinance, and the duties that flow from its consecrating nature ; which rightly understood, will convince much error, and correct many sinfull practises: Which that it may doe, God, Father, Son, and holy Ghost, in whose holy Name we are baptized, follow it with his blessing. Amen.

**F I N I S.**



n  
-  
-  
e  
o  
ne  
e  
w  
ly  
to  
e-  
et  
li-  
ed  
to  
ou  
an  
  
ou  
rd  
ow  
ich  
nce  
in-  
oe,  
t,in  
ed,  
en.

